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GP offices to be named after Mahatma Gandhi

BENGALURU
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'No proposal to extend metro to Doddaballapur'

BENGALURU
There is currently no proposal to extend the Namma Metro line to Doddaballapur, the State government informed the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday. » PAGE 5

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'Mother of all deals': India and EU finalise FTA

- European wines, luxury cars to become cheaper as negotiations, launched in 2007, conclude
- Modi calls it historic pact, while Ursula says it will reduce strategic dependence amid global turmoil
- Officials say document will undergo legal scrubbing before it can be ratified by European Parliament

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

After almost two decades of negotiation, India and the European Union (EU) finalised a free trade agreement (FTA) on Tuesday billed as the "mother of all deals", that will see the EU drop tariffs on 99.5% of Indian exports to the 27-nation bloc.

India has given tariff concessions on 97.5% of imports from the EU, with European wines and luxury cars set to become less expensive here as a result.

Beyond the economics, both sides stressed the geopolitical significance of a deal between two economies that together account for a third of global trade in the shadow of uncertainty sparked by the U.S. tariff regime.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that the partnership would "strengthen stability" at a time of global turmoil, while European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said it would reduce strategic dependency at a time when global trade is increasingly fractious.

"We have delivered the mother of all deals," she said. "Two giants who choose partnership, in a true win-win fashion. A strong message that cooperation is the best answer to global challenges."

Landmark agreement

After almost two decades of talks, the European Union and India sealed a landmark trade pact, driven by U.S. tariff pressures. The deal aims at doubling exports to India

HOW DOES IT BENEFIT EU?

- Tariffs removed or cut on 90% of EU goods
- Wine duties cut from 150% to 20-30%; Spirits cut to 40%
- Car tariffs drop from 110% to 10% (250,000 vehicle quota)
- Tariffs eliminated on Airbus aircraft, and processed food
- 0% tax on most machinery, and pharmaceutical products

HOW DOES IT BENEFIT INDIA?

- Duty-free exports for items such as textiles, leather, gems, and spices
- A duty-free quota of 1.6 million tonnes for steel
- Easier for skilled Indian workers to work in the 27-country bloc
- Dialogue on carbon border tax; India set to be treated like other EU partners
- Phased-out tariffs on arms and ammunition, among other goods

WHAT THE DEAL DOESN'T INCLUDE?

- No concessions on items such as chicken and rice
- No agreement on government procurement on energy and raw materials
- A "sustainable development" chapter (rejected by India)
- Agreement on Geographical Indications

Source: AFP

Diplomatic outreach: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Council President António Costa, on Tuesday in New Delhi. ANI

'Largest-ever FTA'

Noting that this is India's largest-ever FTA, Mr. Modi said: "This historic agreement will facilitate access to the European market for our farmers and small industries, create new opportunities in manufacturing, and strengthen cooperation in our services sectors."

Both sides, however, made sure to exclude their respective sensitive sectors. India's strategic agricultural and dairy sectors remain protected, while the EU will maintain its current tariffs on beef, sugar, rice, chicken meat, milk powder, honey, bananas, soft wheat, garlic, and ethanol.

India-EU FTA talks were first launched in 2007. Following several hiccups and pauses, they were resumed in 2022 with both sides agreeing to exclude issues on which agreement had been elusive.

According to Commerce Ministry officials, the language in the document will first be cleaned up over the next 10 to 15 days, following which it will undergo "legal scrubbing". It will then have to be translated and sent to all 27 EU member states, before it can be ratified by the European Parliament.

"We do hope that we should be able to celebrate the entry into force of this agreement within calendar 2026 itself," said Union Minister Piyush Goyal.

According to the Commerce Ministry, India has gained tariff reductions across 97% of tariff lines, covering 99.5% of trade value. Of this, 90.7% of India's exports will see duties eliminated entirely on the first day of the deal's implementation, including labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, apparel, leather, footwear, tea, coffee, spices, sports goods, toys, gems and jewellery, and certain marine products, amongst others.

Another 2.9% of India's exports will see duty elimination over three to five years.

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Soon, zoom past toll plazas on NH between city and Mysuru

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

In a major move towards barrier-free and congestion-free highways, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is exploring implementation of a Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling pilot project on the 117-km-long Bengaluru-Mysuru Access-Controlled Highway (NH-275) soon.

MLFF system

The MLFF system replaces traditional toll booths with overhead gantries equipped with satellite-based GPS technology, high-performance RFID FASTag readers and Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras. These systems automatically identify vehicles and deduct toll charges at high speeds without requiring vehicles to stop, aiming to eliminate long queues at toll plazas.

The project to implement the MLFF system along this corridor will be awarded to a firm through a tendering process, officials of the NHAI said. A tender has already been floated, and a few firms have submitted bids, which are currently under evaluation, the official added.

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Draped in white

Winter wonderland: Snow-covered vehicles on the outskirts of Srinagar on Tuesday. The Kashmir Valley received fresh snowfall which led to closure of the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway and disrupted flight operations. IMRAN NISSAR (RELATED REPORT ON PAGE 14)

Place in electoral roll is a 'qualified right', poll body says in SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Even registered voters are required to "continuously fulfill" the essential condition of Indian citizenship, as laid out in Article 326 of the Constitution, to retain their place in the electoral roll, the Election Commission of India told the Supreme Court on Tuesday, during a hearing on the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) exercise.

Article 326 provides for adult suffrage, and requires that a person should be 18 years old, an Indian citizen, and not disqualified by law to be entitled to register as a voter.

"These are essential conditions. The fulfilment of these conditions is a continuous requirement. You cannot say once my name is entered, whether I lose eligibility or not, I am entitled to stay on in the electoral roll," senior advocate Maninder Singh, for the EC, submitted before a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant.

The Bench was hearing a batch of petitions challenging the constitutionality of the SIR exercise conducted in Bihar. "The SIR is a verification exercise," Mr. Singh argued.

Senior advocate Dama Seshadhiri Naidu, also appearing for the EC, said the SIR was not a determination of citizenship. "An exercise to verify citizenship is different from a process determining citizenship," he said.

He illustrated how young lawyers have their qualifications verified before becoming a member of the Bar bodies.

Mr. Naidu argued there was "not even one complaint of lapse in Bihar". He sought to focus on the "collateral advantage" of the SIR, explaining how voter turnouts rose in 2025 after the door-to-door survey conducted for the exercise.

> The fulfillment of these conditions [laid out in Article 326] is a continuous requirement. You cannot say once my name is entered, whether I lose eligibility or not, I am entitled to stay on in the electoral roll
>
> **MANINDER SINGH**
> EC counsel

"It had aroused the interest of the common man. It drafted enthusiastic voters and weeded out the dead, duplicates in the electoral roll," he submitted.

'No added parameters'

Advocate Eklavya Dwivedi, for the EC, wrapped up the EC's response to the petitions challenging the SIR, arguing that a place in the electoral roll was a "qualified right".

"Without proof of qualification, no person can enter the electoral roll," he submitted.

Mr. Dwivedi said the EC had not added any further limitations to the conditions prescribed in the Constitution under Article 326, and in Sections 16 (disqualifications for registration in an electoral roll) and 19 (conditions of registration) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

No discrimination under new UGC equity rules: Pradhan

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday sought to allay concerns over the new 2026 University Grants Commission regulations on promoting equity in higher education institutions, amid protests and allegations that the rules discriminate against "general category" students.

Speaking to presspersons in Rajasthan, Mr. Pradhan said the regulations had been notified under the supervision of the Supreme Court. He said "there will be no discrimination" and that "no one will have the right to misuse anything in the name of discrimination".

His remarks came against the backdrop of protests against the UGC regulations in cities such as Lucknow, Indore, and New Delhi, with more demonstrations planned in the coming days, and multiple petitions filed in the Supreme Court challenging the framework.

The new regulations, notified on January 13, define "caste-based discrimination" as discrimination on the basis of caste or tribe against those belonging to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, and the Other Backward Classes. The final version drops a provision proposed in an earlier draft to penalise false complaints.

Critics of the rules have argued that by not recognising students from the "general category" as potential victims of caste-based discrimination, the definition itself is discriminatory. They also flagged the absence of a mechanism to act against complaints believed to be false.

Mr. Pradhan said, "I want to assure everyone that no one will be subject to harassment and there will be no discrimination. No one will have the right to misuse anything in the name of discrimination."

He added that whether it was the UGC, the Centre or any State governments, it will be their responsibility to ensure fair implementation.

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Voicing dissent: Students staging a protest against the new UGC regulations near Lucknow University on Tuesday. PTI

Students stage stir against rules in U.P.

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

The University Grants Commission (UGC)'s new regulations triggered protests in Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday, with a section of students demonstrating at Lucknow University against the rules, alleging they would affect their studies and future.

The protesting students staged a sit-in at the university's main gate and raised slogans against the UGC, claiming the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026 could lead to caste conflict and disrupt social harmony on campuses. "We demand that the UGC reconsider the framework and initiate a wider, inclusive dialogue before enforcing the new rules. These rules disturb the social balance," said Anmol Singh, an LLB student, told presspersons.

The issue has sparked dissent within the BJP, with a few local leaders expressing anger over the regulations and resigning from party posts.

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Happy that I still have the hunger to perform

The 36-year-old Belgian superstar, despite being at the fag end of his illustrious career, is keeping pace with up-and-coming talent; he says the Los Angeles Olympics is likely to be his final bow

BISWARANJAN ROUT

INTERVIEW

Tom Boon

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

In Ranchi Royals colours, Belgian superstar Tom Boon emerged as the top-scorer of the Hockey India League (HIL). Even in the final phase of his illustrious career, the World and Olympic champion is leading by example.

Donning multiple roles as a forward, drag-flicker and mentor, Boon, who celebrated his 36th birthday on January 25, has set a great example for up-and-coming players across the globe. Boon, an inspirational figure in the hockey world, spoke to *The Hindu* about his magnificent career and future goals. Excerpts:

How do you see your emergence as the top-scorer of HIL and did you expect to lead the chart?

No (I did not expect it), I'm really happy about it. It's part of my job; I'm a striker, I'm taking the penalty corners, the penalty strokes. Somehow it's normal that I stand there. I'm happy that the team has grown as well, that we have taken some great steps forward. When we look back at where we came from, from the first match and the visage we have now, it's an improved team. I'm just proud and happy to be part of it.

Given the short time period for preparation before HIL, how challenging was it to gel with players of different nationalities and adapt to styles of play?

It was challenging. Everyone has their own way of playing and we had to try to make something work. I was working hand-in-hand with Harendra Singh to make something work, to try to help with my experience there. What we saw from Ranchi was that we grew and this was the most important thing. I'm happy about it, we started on a not-so-good note but we kept believing. We worked hard to make it work and the most important of all is we were a really solid group. Manpreet Singh did a really nice job to try and connect the Indians with foreigners. The Indians looked really, really happy to be together, they're good friends with the foreigners as well. The whole mix is important. Everyone is equal, everyone wants the best for the team.

Young Indian players benefitting from HIL is well known but do you see any gains for overseas players, other than the money?

It's challenging to get out of your comfort zone. I'm going to give an easy example about me. I had never been a captain before, I was a captain this season. I got out of my comfort zone. I tried to do it as well as I could and everyone seemed to be happy, so it was a great experience. I will take the learnings from it, try to dare to speak more in a changing room when I'm back with Belgium.

Are you looking forward to the FIH Pro League in Rourkela and will the HIL exposure help everyone who participate there?

Yeah, I hope so. I hope the crowd will be there in Rourkela, it's been really nice playing in that stadium. It's one of the most beautiful stadiums that I have played in, so yeah I am happy to play India again, it has been a while.

The Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar holds a special place for you as you won the World Cup here eight years ago. How do you feel returning to the venue?

It was amazing being here. It was the first title for Belgium, it was the first time Belgium won anything in any sport and it was here. Of course, I do remember a lot being here, it has been eight years already, time flies. But I was really happy to be back in this stadium, it's going to always have a special place in my heart.

How do you keep yourself competitive despite growing challenges from younger players? Is there anything extra you do for fitness and recovery these days?

I have to, I'm 36 now. I have to take care of my body as much as I can. I try to go to the gym almost every day for recovery sessions, to keep my body in shape. I'm really happy that I can still perform at my age and the hunger I still have is something I cherish because I also know it's going to be finished soon. So I try to enjoy every moment as much as I can.

Do you do anything specific to stay in good shape?

Yeah, every morning when I wake up, I go to the gym and do some exercises for core stabilisation, when I feel I have some pain in my calf or hammy (hamstring). I'm happy with the work I've done so far.

You're part of the golden generation of Belgian players and you are seeing a transition now. How do you mentor and compete with younger guys who may have a different mindset?

It's nice, my position has changed a little bit. I try to share my experience as much as I can. I'm never going to say that I'm right or wrong, I'm just trying to give my opinion; it's something I didn't do much in my early days. I'm trying to give some tips to certain players at certain moments. Afterwards, they do whatever they want with it. If they think it's a good tip, I'm happy. If they think they should do something else, I'm happy as well. I'm happy to give back a little bit of what I received.

What kind of target do you have for the upcoming home World Cup and Los Angeles Olympics?

I think we can dream big, that's why I love sports. Everything is possible, it would be so nice to lift the cup in front of our own crowds. Of course, it's going to be a really, really difficult journey.

There are four, five or six teams who can win it, so it's going to be difficult, but we're going to train hard, play hard and do whatever we can to try to be as good as we can.

It's (LA28) a little bit more personal (call for me), it's going to be my last tournament, that's for sure. Maybe I'm going to stop before that. At the moment, I just keep dreaming of playing other tournaments, we will see after the World Cup how it goes (for me) and see if I still have the faith to go forward till LA28.

You're a third-generation hockey player. Would you like your children to carry forward the family tradition?

Yeah. My little boy is already playing. He's four, he started playing in September. I think he loves it. At the moment, he dreams to be a goalie, so we'll see what he's going to become. But I'm the kind of father who is pretty relaxed. He's going to choose whatever he wants to do.

I'm going to try to be there for him if he needs me, but he's going to choose what he's going to do.

Karnataka forms gig workers' welfare development board

According to the notification, the Labour Minister will be the ex-officio president of the board

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Tuesday issued a notification constituting the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers' Welfare Development Board under the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers' (Social Security and Welfare Development) Act, 2025.

According to the notification, the Labour Minister will be the ex-officio president of the board. Senior officials from the Labour Department, the Department of Information Technology and the Commercial Taxes Department have been included as ex-officio members. The Chief Executive Officer of the board will function as the member-secretary.

The board includes four representatives of gig workers from unions representing food delivery and app-based transport workers, and four representatives from aggregator platforms. Representatives from Porter, Zomato, Uber and Amazon have been named as aggregator members. The committee also includes labour unions, including United Food Delivery Partners Union, the Indian Federation of App Based Transport Workers, All India Trader Union Congress (AITUC), and Ola Uber Drivers and Owners' Association.

Aggregators will have 45 days to complete their registration and furnish details of all gig workers engaged through their platforms. K. MURALI KUMAR

The constitution of the board follows the State govt.'s decision to implement welfare measures for gig workers through a dedicated statutory body

The constitution of the board follows the State government's decision to move ahead with the implementation of welfare measures for gig workers through a dedicated statutory body. Now, both aggregator platforms and gig workers will be required to register with the board.

Aggregators will have 45 days to complete their registration and furnish details of all gig workers engaged through their platforms. Each registered gig worker will be issued a unique identification number, which will be used by the board to disburse social security benefits. The welfare fund will comprise the welfare fee collected from aggregators, contributions made by gig workers, and grants provided by the State and Central governments.

The State has decided to levy a welfare fee of 1% to 1.5%, with a cap, on aggregator platforms, with the rate varying across sectors and business models. Labour Minister Santosh Lad had said the levy was kept low initially to ensure a steady welfare fund for gig workers without placing an immediate financial burden on platforms.

Officials had also said that once contributions begin to flow into the welfare fund, the board will assess whether the collections are sufficient to extend social security benefits to gig workers. The welfare fee may be revised, up to a maximum of 5%, if the funds are found to be inadequate.

Labour unions welcome formation of welfare board

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

After the State government formally constituted the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers' Welfare Development Board, representatives of gig workers' unions and associations welcomed the move, calling it a significant step towards recognising gig and platform workers as they are entitled to social security and legal protections.

But some members opined that the welfare fee per translation to be paid by platforms may not be sufficient.

'Shows the way'
Shaik Salauddin, national general secretary of the Indian Federation of App-Based Transport Workers (IFAT), said, "Karnataka had 'shown the way' by institutionalising a welfare board for gig workers".

"This recognises gig workers as workers deserving dignity, rights and social protection," he said.

He said the Karnataka model should serve as a precedent for other States and the Union government to establish similar welfare boards and enact comprehensive legislation covering social security, fair wages, occupational safety and grievance redressal for gig and platform workers.

Mr. Salauddin also expressed hope that the board would function in a transparent manner, with meaningful representation of gig workers and their unions in decision-making. "The real success of this board will lie in its effective implementation and its ability to improve the lives of workers on the ground," he said.

Under the framework notified by the State government, both aggregator platforms and gig workers will be required to register with the welfare board.

Tanveer Pasha, president of the Ola Uber Drivers' and Owners' Association, said the formation of the board marked the beginning of discussions that had been ongoing since 2019.

"This issue was repeatedly discussed earlier but sidelined. Now, at least, the Labour Minister and the department have shown seriousness through meetings and concrete steps towards implementation," he said, adding that both company representatives and worker representatives had been included in the board, which is a welcome step.

Some reservations
Some members, however, who are part of the 16-member committee said, on condition of anonymity, that the welfare fee proposed at 1% to 1.5% may not be sufficient to sustainably fund social security benefits for gig workers. They said that once costs such as health insurance, accident coverage, pensions and administrative expenses are accounted for, the initial corpus may fall short, particularly given the large and growing number of gig workers in the State.

While welcoming the formation of the board as a crucial first step, they cautioned that the effectiveness of the welfare framework would ultimately depend on whether the levy generates adequate resources to deliver meaningful benefits on the ground.

Uber, one of the four platform representatives on the committee, and Swiggy were unavailable for comment despite repeated attempts.

Three arrested, drugs worth ₹4 lakh seized in separate cases

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Subramanyapura police have arrested three persons and seized drugs worth ₹4 lakh in two separate drug-related cases in the city.

In the first case, the police seized 4 kg of ganja, 37 gm of MDMA, and 35 gm of hashish oil, along with a two-wheeler allegedly used for transporting the drugs.

Acting on a tip-off, the police conducted an operation near Poornaprajna Nagar in the Subramanyapura police station limits, and nabbed the accused while they were allegedly selling drugs. During interrogation, the accused reportedly confessed that they procured narcotic substances at a lower price from their contacts outside the State and sold them at higher rates to their customers, including college students, for financial gain. Further investigation revealed the involvement of three more persons, who are currently absconding.

Efforts are under way to trace them.

In another case, the Jalahalli police arrested a drug peddler and seized 31 gm of MDMA worth approximately ₹3 lakh. The accused was caught near the HMT Watch Factory Road railway bridge while allegedly selling the banned substance. Further investigation is under way.

Removing '10 minutes delivery' from branding: Zepto co-founder Aadit Palicha

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Zepto Limited's co-founder and CEO Aadit Palicha, in a recent post on LinkedIn, has said that the quick-commerce company would remove '10 minutes' from its branding. The announcement came close on the heels of a meeting Mr. Palicha had with Union Minister of Labour and Employment Mansukh Mandaviya, on January 20.

"In that spirit, our hope is to partner with the government and serve its initiatives in taking our country forward. Of course, we are not perfect and we are always open to inputs from the government on how we can improve. This is what we did recently when Mansukh Ji gave us a good faith suggestion to remove '10 minutes' from our branding," read an excerpt from the post.

Aadit Palicha

While Blinkit has previously changed its slogan from "10,000+ products delivered in 10 minutes" to "30,000+ products delivered at your doorstep", following a reported meeting with Mr. Mandaviya, this is the first time the CEO of a prominent quick commerce platform making an announcement on the changes around the '10-minute delivery' branding. Zepto's slogan previously read "Groceries delivered in 10 minutes".

Mr. Palicha, noting that delivery partners are the soul of the company, claimed that Zepto has created employment for over 1,80,000 delivery partners and 40,000 store personnel, truck drivers, and warehouse operators, acknowledging similar contributions from other companies such as Eternal (parent company of Zomato and Blinkit), Swiggy, Rapido and Urban Company.

"We take pride in the thousands of crores of payouts we disburse to our workforce every year, the world-class service we give to Indian consumers (better than the service in most developed countries), the farmers we help expand through our fruits and vegetables vertical, and the thousands of new Indian brands we help build with our platform," the co-founder wrote.

According to a statement from the company, during the meeting, the Minister reiterated the government's support for platforms that are contributing to job creation and workforce participation.

"Delivery partners are central to the gig economy, and platforms like Zepto are committed to building sustainable models that support livelihoods while delivering value to consumers," Mr. Palicha said, in a communique issued after the meeting.

Court rejects bail plea of Rajeev Gowda

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A local court in Sidlaghatta on Tuesday rejected the bail plea of Congress leader B.V. Rajeev Gowda and remanded him in judicial custody in connection with a case involving threats allegedly issued to the Sidlaghatta municipal Commissioner, Amrutha Gowda.

Grave offence
The court took a serious view of the allegations, observing that the offence was grave in nature. After hearing arguments, the judge dismissed the bail application and ordered judicial remand.

The police had sought five days of custodial interrogation, citing the need for further investigation. However, the court declined the request and instead sent the accused to judicial custody.

Rajeev Gowda was produced before the Sidlaghatta court following his arrest at the Kerala border on Monday. He had been on the run since January 14.

Second accused
Meanwhile, the court granted bail Michael Joseph, who was named the second accused in the case.

Joseph, who was arrested for harbouring Rajeev Gowda at a farmhouse in Mangaluru, was produced before the court, following which the judge allowed his bail application after hearing arguments from both sides.

India RISE Fellowship launches inaugural cohort of 41 women scientists at IISc

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The India RISE (Research & Innovation STEMM Empowerment) Fellowship, a flagship initiative of the Gupta-Klinsky India Institute at Johns Hopkins University, launched its inaugural cohort of 41 women scientists at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

The 41 women scientists are from 16 States and Union Territories, representing 30 premier research and academic institutions, including IISc, multiple IITs, AIIMS, ICMR institutes, and leading public universities.

Year-long programme
Conceptualised under the U.S.-India Alliance for Women's Economic Empowerment, the India RISE Fellowship is a year-long, part-time programme designed to address persistent gender gaps in India's research and innovation ecosystem.

The fellowship supports women scientists at a critical career stage when many face structural barriers and heightened risk of exiting the STEMM workforce. The fellows work across high-impact research areas, including non-communicable diseases, public health, infectious diseases, maternal and child health, digital health and medical devices, AI and statistics, and medical diagnostics.

The fellowship supports women scientists at a critical career stage when many face structural barriers and heightened risk of exiting the STEMM workforce. FILE PHOTO

The 41 women scientists are from 16 States and Union Territories, representing 30 premier research and academic institutions

Most of them hold doctoral or medical terminal degrees, with 61% holding PhDs.

The launch at the IISc featured keynote and special remarks, leadership training and workshops, along with a fireside chat on institutional change. Speakers included Soumya Swaminathan, former Chief Scientist at the World Health Organisation and former Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research; Uma Nambiar, CEO, Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital at IISc Bangalore; Shivkumar Kalyanaraman, Chief Executive Officer, Anusandhan National Research Foundation; and Usha Vijayraghavan, Dean, Biological Sciences Division, IISc Bangalore.

Early career support critical
"Early career support is critical, as it is when mentorship and peer learning have the greatest impact. Women are often expected to make disproportionate personal sacrifices, but a fulfilling career in STEMM and a meaningful personal life need not be mutually exclusive. With the right support systems, women can grow into leadership while sustaining both," said Ms. Swaminathan.

Cash management firm staff siphon off ₹1.3 cr. meant for ATMs

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

On the back of the sensational cash van robbery case, another major fraud involving a payment service company has surfaced in the city.

The employees of Hitachi Payment Services Pvt. Ltd., which provides ATM cash management services to two major banks , have allegedly siphoned off over ₹1.3 crore meant for ATM cash replenishment.

According to the police, the accused were entrusted with collecting cash from a private bank in Koramangala and depositing it into various ATMs.

However, instead of loading the cash, they allegedly pocketed the money and escaped.

Two separate FIRs have been registered at the Koramangala police station in connection with the fraud. In the first case, a sum of ₹57 lakh was allegedly misappropriated by staff, identified as Praveen, Dhanashekhar, Ramakka and Harish Kumar. In the second case, another ₹80 lakh was allegedly siphoned off by Harish Kumar and Praveen, along with Varun, acting as part of a separate team. Probe revealed that the accused had stolen the cash in small amounts for the past one year, hoodwinking the audit of the company.

According to the police, both teams followed a similar modus operandi, deliberately failing to deposit the cash into ATMs after withdrawing it from the bank. The cases were registered on January 19, following complaints lodged by the company. The police are verifying the CCTV footage and call records to track them down.

The incident has once again raised serious questions about the security measures and surveillance systems of private cash management companies.

The incident comes close on the heels of the November 2025 CMS cash van robbery, in which nearly ₹7.11 crore was looted in broad daylight. The police have launched a manhunt for the accused.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Dr. V. Uma
MSc (IIT Madras)
PhD (Chemical Lab, CLRI)
HOD Chemistry Dept. &
Vice Principal, Arignar Anna Govt. Arts College, Cheyyar

Expired on 21.01.26 at 7.16 am at her residence at Medavakkam, leaving behind her husband **G. Ramasubramaniam** and rest of the family.

Uma lived a **life of purpose** - touching countless hearts as a selfless teacher and sharing her soul through **Ragasurabhi**, her gift to the Carnatic music world.

The light that guided us on earth has now become a **Pole Star in the skies.** Though her absence leaves a deep void, her love and legacy will continue to guide us forever.

Ram & Family
+91 89399 84380

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

4th Death Anniversary
Always loved, forever missed

10.08.1932 - 28.01.2022
DR. C.R.DAKSHINAMURTHI MS
Retired Dean Stanley Medical College
A kind, gentle and caring soul. Reunited with his beloved wife Saroja.
May they both Rest in Peace.

HOMAGE

Dr. V. SANKAR (75 yrs)
Alumni of IIT, Kharagpur,
Passed away on 9th December 2025
Cremated on 12-12-2025.
He lived a life of selfless service, was a revered leader and a social worker. His legacy lives on through the lives he touched.
He was an integral part of Bharat Vikas Parishad / BVPJST / All India Radio Electronics Association /Senior Citizens Forum.
May the departed soul attain Sadgati
Phone: 98400 99170

To make sense of cosmic rays, CERN team tracks a fragile nucleus

Why is finding out how deuterons survive particle collisions in the Large Hadron Collider important? If scientists have to predict how light nuclei form in high-energy collisions in space, like when cosmic rays strike interstellar gas, they need to know which formation mechanisms are possible and which ones nature forbids

Vasudevan Mukunth
CHENNAI

Close watch: A view of the ALICE detector, one of nine detectors on the Large Hadron Collider in 2007. CERN

THE GIST

The neutron and proton in the deuterium nucleus are bound with a very low binding energy, making deuterons seem fragile relative to the energetic, messy environment created when particles collide at nearly the speed of light at the LHC

Yet experiments have repeatedly observed deuterons (and anti-deuterons) emerging from these collisions

Most deuterons are not born as readymade nuclei at the instant of collision but are instead assembled shortly afterwards from existing protons and neutrons

The hydrogen atom is the lightest in the universe and it consists of the simplest nucleus: a single proton. But while helium is the second-lightest element, its nucleus isn't the second simplest. That distinction belongs to the deuteron, the nucleus of the deuterium atom, which contains one proton and one neutron. (Deuterium is an isotope of hydrogen.)

However, the two particles are bound with a very low binding energy, making deuterons seem fragile relative to the energetic, messy environment created when particles collide at nearly the speed of light at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC). Yet experiments have repeatedly observed deuterons (and anti-deuterons) emerging from these collisions. How do they survive this environment?

Coalescence scenario

Physicists have come up with two broad explanations. One, called direct emission, assumes the deuterons are produced directly from a hot source, meaning their formation doesn't involve a different particle (or particles) condensing from a soup of energy, then decaying to form deuterons. The other idea, called coalescence, holds that the proton and neutron are produced first, then they stick together later if they get close enough.

The problem is a proton and a neutron can't fuse if they have too much energy, so there has to be a third particle to carry away the excess energy. That third participant can be a type of particle called pion that acts like a catalyst, i.e. it will enable the reaction without becoming part of the final deuteron.

Finding out whether this is possible matters beyond collider physics. If scientists have to predict how light nuclei and antinuclei form in high-energy collisions in space – such as when cosmic rays strike interstellar gas – they need to know which formation mechanisms are possible and which ones nature doesn't 'allow'.

Delta resonance

A new study out of the ALICE collaboration at the LHC has provided the answer. The collaboration works with the ALICE detector, one of nine detectors on the LHC. At four points on its ring, the LHC smashes together opposing beams of protons at high energy. The collisions produce a morass of particles and reactions between them. The detectors have computers and sensors that are triggered when they identify reactions of interest and which they record and analyse.

For the new study, the ALICE collaboration used a technique called femtoscopy to infer how and when particles were produced by checking whether two particles come out with very similar velocities more often than chance would predict. Its basic object was a ratio called the correlation function. The numerator was how often a given pair (a pion and a deuteron) is seen with a small relative momentum. The denominator was how often such pairs would form assuming they had no affinity for each other.

The team was looking specifically for a particle called Δ1232) resonance. ('Δ' is pronounced 'delta'.) The resonance is a very short-lived excited version of a proton or a neutron that quickly decays. Δ(1232) in particular decays into a pion and a proton or neutron. If a deuteron is later formed using that same proton (or neutron), then the pion and the deuteron would appear to be 'linked' in the data by having a correlated momentum.

ALICE reported just this signal in the pion-deuteron data, meaning many of the deuterons are formed after the Δ decays, rather than directly at the start.

Where a nucleus is born

If the pions were only bumping into deuterons that already existed, some of those collisions should have broken the deuteron apart (which is fragile, remember). In that case, the data should've shown a dip around the Δ region. ALICE, however, found a positive signal, meaning deuterons were forming after Δ particles decayed and the pions from the same decay were correlated with the new deuterons.

The study noted that scientists can use the insight on deuterons to build more realistic models of reactions induced by cosmic rays, which are energetic protons and atomic nuclei which often collide with other nuclei in outer space

Norwegian University of Science and Technology physics professor Michael Kachelriess called the finding a "great achievement" to *Physics World*.

From the size of the Δ signal, the team estimated that around 62% of deuterons were produced following Δ decays. They figured if they included other short-lived resonances as well, about 80% of deuterons would be formed by coalescence.

This seems to be the answer to why deuterons can survive the LHC's high-energy collisions. Resonances usually travel a short distance before they decay, so the coalescence that forms deuterons happens slightly later and slightly away from the most violent part of the collision. Thus the deuterons are also 'born' into a less extreme environment.

Cosmic rays, dark matter

In sum, most deuterons aren't born as readymade nuclei at the instant of collision but are instead assembled shortly afterwards from existing protons and neutrons, with help from pions nearby. This should change how theorists model the way nuclei (and anti-nuclei) are produced in high-energy particulate reactions.

In fact the ALICE team's paper, published on December 10, noted that scientists can use this insight to build more realistic models of reactions induced by cosmic rays.

Cosmic rays are very energetic protons and atomic nuclei hurtling through space and which often collide with other nuclei in outer space. When scientists are studying telescope data of these collisions or are modelling them in the lab, e.g. for astronomy research or because they're sending a probe to that part of space, they'll need to know which signals are coming from which sources.

"These findings not only explain a long-standing puzzle in nuclear physics but could have far-reaching implications for astrophysics and cosmology," the ALICE team said in a statement.

"Light nuclei and antinuclei are also produced in interactions between cosmic rays and the interstellar medium, and they may be created in processes involving the dark matter that pervades the universe. By building reliable models for the production of light nuclei and anti-nuclei, physicists can better interpret cosmic-ray data and look for possible dark-matter signals."

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BIG SHOT

First stroke: Conservationists release a juvenile Indo-Pacific leopard shark off Maiton Island, in Phuket, Thailand on December 8, 2025. The Thai government, aquariums, and NGOs came together in a project last year to release seven leopard shark pups in a bid revive their population in the wild. REUTERS

QUESTION CORNER

Leaps and bounds

Q: How did kangaroos evolve to hop?

A: For a long time, biomechanics experts believed that giant, extinct kangaroos were simply too heavy to hop. While the largest modern kangaroos weigh around 90 kg, their prehistoric relatives were much larger and weighed more than 250 kg. And scientists previously calculated that if you took the anatomy of a modern kangaroo and scaled it up to that weight, the forces generated by hopping would snap their ankle tendons and fracture their bones.

However, a January 22 study has challenged this limit: by looking at the fossils rather than relying only on mathematical scaling from modern kangaroos, researchers have found that kangaroo ancestors didn't just grow larger: they also evolved a different skeletal structure to handle the immense weight.

The study identified two major adaptations that made hopping mechanically possible for these giants. First, their weight-bearing foot bones, the fourth metatarsals, were significantly shorter and thicker than those of modern kangaroos. This compact shape made the bones more resistant to bending forces, preventing fractures upon landing. Second, their heel bones, called calcanea, were much wider, providing a large area for the gastrocnemius tendon to attach. This suggested the animals possessed thick tendons capable of withstanding the tensions required to lift their bodies.

A kangaroo near White Cliffs, an Outback area in the state of New South Wales, Australia. AFP

There was one trade-off, however. While the adaptations allowed them to hop without injury, the giants likely sacrificed speed and energy efficiency. Unlike modern kangaroos that bounce efficiently over long distances, the extinct giants probably hopped only for short, high-power bursts, perhaps to escape predators.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Armed robbery at jewellery shop in broad daylight; 3 flee with gold, cash

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Three armed men barged into a jewellery shop and assaulted two youths before allegedly fleeing with gold ornaments and cash in broad daylight near Dasanapura bus stop, in the Madanayakanahalli police station limits, on Tuesday.

According to the police, the accused arrived at the shop on a two-wheeler around 5.30 p.m., threatened those present with a pistol, and attempted to rob the premises.

Scuffle

A scuffle broke out with two youths, who are the sons of the shop owner, Manikram of Ramdev Jewellers. One of them sustained minor injuries while trying to resist the robbers.

The trio reportedly made away with over 30 gm of gold jewellery and ₹50,000 in cash before speeding away on the motorcycle.

The entire incident was captured on the CCTV cameras installed inside the shop.

Case registered

Confirming the incident, Bengaluru North-West Division DCP D.L. Nagesh said a case of robbery has been registered based on the complaint filed by the jeweller, and assured that efforts are on to trace and arrest the accused at the earliest.

'Clues on accused'

"We have some clues on the accused and working on it to track them down," Mr. Nagesh said.

Tobacco concealed in iron balls found inside prison

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The staff at the Central Prison of Parappana Agrahara on Friday recovered 120 gm of tobacco concealed inside three iron balls. The prison officials said, the balls were recovered when the staff were cleaning the premises near the 8th barrack. Preliminary probe suggested that the iron balls containing the banned substance were thrown from outside the prison with the intention of supplying them to inmates. A case has been registered.

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The decrease in India's power emissions in 11 months

38 in million tonnes. Discharges by Indian utilities declined 38 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, or 4.1%, in the 11 months to the end of November, according to estimates based on monthly government statistics compiled by energy think-tank Ember. REUTERS

The area of Ukrainian land captured by Russia in January

500 in square kilometre. Russian forces captured 17 settlements and took control of more than 500 square kilometres of territory in Ukraine so far in January, Russia's top general, Valery Gerasimov, said on Tuesday. REUTERS

Number of Syrians displaced in the SDF civil war

1.73 in lakh. The International Organisation for Migration has registered more than 1,73,000 people displaced in the civil war between the Syrian Democratic Forces and the Syrian government. The government forces captured most of the SDF-held territory in Syria's northeast. PTI

The duty on EU wines in India under the new FTA agreement

20 In per cent. European wines are set to enter the Indian market at lower prices under the bilateral free trade agreement as India will provide import duty concessions under the pact, an official said. Under the pact, the duty on EU wines would fall from 150% to 20% (for expensive ones). PTI

Days for which Israeli Hostages Square clock was operational

844 A clock in a Tel Aviv square that became a rallying point for Israelis demanding the release of hostages taken during the October 2023 Hamas attack will be turned off on Tuesday, 844 days after it began counting their captivity. REUTERS

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What's happening in Syria's Kurdish regions?

How was the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria or Rojava established? Why did the Shaara-Abdi agreement fall through? Why does Turkiye support the Syrian government forces? What has been the U.S.'s position? What does the ceasefire agreement demand?

EXPLAINER

Stanly Johny

The story so far:

When Bashar al-Assad's regime collapsed in December 2024, many hoped it would mark the end of Syria's years-long civil strife. Ahmed al-Sharaa (formerly Abu Muhammad al-Golani), who emerged as the country's interim leader, pledged to form an inclusive administration. But the past year has been marked by a resurgence of sectarian violence against the Alawites in the west and the Druze community in the south. In the latest flare-up, fighting broke out in the country's northeast, between government forces and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). The SDF has been pushed out of parts of eastern Syria it once controlled, and, despite a ceasefire, a tense standoff persists between Kurdish militias and government forces in the country's Kurdish areas. The renewed violence now threatens to unravel the autonomy Syria's Kurds have exercised since the 2011 civil war.

Who are the main Kurdish actors?

Syria's Kurds, who make up roughly 10% of the country's population, have long demanded autonomy for the Kurdish-populated regions in the north and east. When the Assad regime was forced to withdraw troops from the northeast in 2012, amid the civil war, Kurdish parties, councils and militias moved swiftly to fill the vacuum by establishing their own administrative structures. Several Kurdish regions (called 'cantons') came together to declare autonomy from the Syrian state, and establish the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES), also known as Rojava.

The main party in Rojava is the left-leaning Democratic Union Party (PYD), whose ideology is rooted in the 'democratic confederalism' championed by Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Another major political actor is the Kurdistan National Council (KNC), which is aligned with the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party. The main armed militia in Rojava is the People's Protection Units (YPG), which is aligned with the PYD, the ruling party. The YPG and its women's brigade YPJ gained prominence in 2014-15 as they defeated Islamic State (IS) jihadists in Syria's Kobane, a predominantly Kurdish region. After their victories against the IS in Syria's north and east, the U.S. started offering them air cover in the battles against jihadists. In 2015, with the blessings of the U.S., the Kurdish leaders formed the SDF with Arab and other minority militias, with the YPG being its core component.

Why did fighting break out?

The question of Kurdish autonomy emerged immediately after the Assad government fell. Mr. Sharaa, formerly the chief of al-Qaeda's Syria branch, wanted to establish a centralised regime in Damascus – an idea pushed back by the country's ethnic and religious minority communities. In March 2025, Mr. Sharaa and SDF commander Mazloum Abdi signed an integration agreement, laying out principles for integrating the SDF and other administrative units into the Syrian state. But the Kurds were clear on one point – they did not want to forfeit the autonomy they had built over more than a decade. In an interview with *The Hindu* in May, Salih Muslim Muhammad, co-chairman of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) said that "nobody wants another centralised regime in Syria".

Taut relation: Members of the Syrian Democratic Forces queue to settle their status with the Syrian government in Raqqa, Syria on January 27. REUTERS

The Shaara-Abdi agreement promised to flesh out the details of integration by the end of the year, but that deadline passed without progress. Tensions mounted as Damascus proposed deploying its troops in Kurdish regions. While the Syrian government wanted to extend its control across the country which it thinks is essential for reasserting its sovereignty, Kurdish leaders argued that losing military control of the north and east would imperil their autonomy. As talks stalled in early January, Mr. Sharaa's forces moved into the Arab neighbourhoods of Aleppo, which were controlled by Kurdish forces. Fighting soon followed and government forces asserted control within days, forcing the SDF to withdraw to the northeast.

What does Damascus want?

While the Syrian state forces withdrew in 2012 and other rebel and jihadist groups were preoccupied with their battles against Damascus during the civil war, the IS exploited the vacuum to establish a solid presence in Syria's east. But the YPG, the Kurdish militia, emerged as critical foot soldiers in the war against the IS. The first major defeat the IS faced was at the hands of the YPG. In the following years, the YPG (or the SDF, the expanded version) became the key anti-IS force on the ground in Syria while the U.S. provided them air cover. They controlled the regions they liberated from the IS and established Rojava. The Assad regime tolerated Kurdish autonomy because it was preoccupied with other problems.

Now, Mr. Sharaa, who has been emboldened by the international recognition he has achieved, wants to end Kurdish autonomy. He has taken a two-pronged approach. On January 16, amid ongoing fighting between government forces and the SDF, Mr. Sharaa issued a decree formally recognising Kurdish as a "national language" and offering citizenship to all Syrian Kurds. He also declared Newroz, the new year festival celebrated by Kurds, as a national holiday. But he said nothing about Kurdish autonomy. His plan is to give cultural concessions while taking control of the Kurdish militias militarily.

Where do Turkiye and the U.S. stand?

Turkiye sees the PYD (the political party) and the YPG (the militia) as extended arms of the PKK (the Turkiye-based Kurdish group which has been designated as a terrorist entity by Ankara and its Western allies). Mr. Sharaa and his group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) are close allies of Turkiye. Ankara backed Mr. Sharaa's plan to integrate the Kurdish administrative and military structures into the Syrian state. When Kurds resisted the move, in December 2025, Turkiye warned against them. In the past, Turkiye had carried out military operations to push Kurdish forces away from the Syria-Turkish border and create a buffer. Now that a peace process is under way in Turkiye between the government and the PKK, Ankara believes weakening of the SDF across the border would strengthen its hand and weaken the overall Kurdish push for confederational autonomy.

The U.S. on the other side backed the SDF in the fight against the IS. The U.S. still has some 900 troops in Syria, mostly in the Kurdish northeast. But Washington has warmed up to Damascus after Mr. Sharaa, a former designated terrorist who carried a $10 million State Department bounty on his head, captured power. Mr. Sharaa visited Washington in November 2025 and met Mr. Trump after which Syria announced that it would join the U.S.-led coalition to fight the IS. Now that the U.S. has Damascus, it doesn't need the Kurds to maintain its presence in Syria. The U.S. and Turkiye also find common ground in establishing a centralised Syria, by strengthening the hands of Sharaa, so that the influence of Iran and Russia could be gradually neutralised.

What lies ahead?

After seizing the SDF-held regions of Aleppo, Mr. Sharaa's forces turned to areas between Aleppo and the Euphrates River. These predominantly Arab-populated regions were captured by the SDF between 2015 and 2019 after it drove out the IS. SDF positions subsequently collapsed across Raqqa and Deir al-Zour, both former IS strongholds. Reports also emerged of internal cracks within the SDF, with some Arab militias breaking ranks with YPG commanders. Dozens of IS members escaped from a prison in Hassaka which was caught in the crossfire. On January 18, Mr. Abdi, the SDF commander, agreed to a ceasefire and integration deal. Mr. Sharaa insists that the military integration of the SDF be undertaken on an "individual basis"– not as units. The ceasefire agreement also asks the SDF to hand over Raqqa and Deir al-Zour provinces "administratively and militarily" to the government; to integrate all administrative institutions in al-Hassaka into government structures; to hand over all border crossings and oil and gas fields; and to expel all non-Syrian members of the PKK from Syria.

But there seems to be serious disagreements on the degree of autonomy Kurds would retain. The agreement affirms the need "to protect the special character of the Kurdish areas". The SDF seems ready to give up Raqqa and Deir al-Zour, but they don't want to give up their positions in Kobane, al-Hassaka and Qamishli. While the Sharaa regime wants to end the SDF's local monopoly on the use of force, the SDF doesn't want government troops to be deployed in Kurdish areas. A Kurdish representative based in Europe told *The Hindu* that the autonomous administration has called for a general mobilisation. "Kobane is now under siege. But Kurdish fighters are defending their positions," he said.

THE GIST

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INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT) (SHORT TERM) KW-4

e-TENDER NOTIFICATION

(1) The Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Sirasi invites tenders from eligible tenderers, for the construction of works detailed in the Table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for any or all of the works given in the Table. **The price tender which will be opened only if the Tenderer is found to be qualified to execute the tendered works. The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. (26.03.2021)** (2) Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka e-Procurement website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/eportal/index.seam** under login for Contractors: (3) Tenders must be accompanied by EMD Declaration form Proforma attached (4) Tenders must be electronically submitted (on-line through internet) with in the date and time published in e-procurement portal. The technical bid will be opened after prescribed time and date in the eprocurement portal, in the presence of the Tenderers who wish to attend at the Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Department, SIRSI Division. (5) Other details can be seen in the tender documents

(Total: 2 Works)

(1) Last date and time for Tender Queries/Clarifications: **29-01-2026 up to 16.00.00** (2) Last Date and Time for receipt of tenders: **30-01-2026 up to 16.00.00** (3) Date and Time for opening of Technical Bid: **31-01-2026 @ 16.30.00** (4) Date and Time for opening of Financial Bid: **02-02-2026 @16.00.00**

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Public Work Department Division
Sirsi (Uttara Kannada)

DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/987/25-26 dt. 27.01.2026

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT MANGALURU DIVISION MANGALURU

Ref :PWD:MD:TND:(40E)(31E): 2025-26:JE-1 Dated: 23.01.2026

SHORTERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Karnataka Public E-Procurement Portal) / EXTENSION

The Executive Engineer, PWD, Division. Mangaluru Inviting Tender under K.P.P Portal: **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from eligible Tenderers in accordance with KTPP Act Indent No: 31856 (Est.Amount Rs.650.00 Lakhs) **Head of Account 5054-04-337-0-01-154 District Roads and Improvements.** The Last date for reciept of **tender: 11.02.2026 upto 17.00 Hours.**

Indent No:30153 (Est.Amount Rs.900.00 Lakhs) under the **Head of Account: 4059-80-051-0-32-386 Court Building. The Last date for reciept of tender extended to 26.02.2026 upto 17.00 Hours.**

Tenders for the above works are invited as per the Standard Tender Document KW-4. Further details such as value of work, amount put to tender, EMD etc., can be accessed on the KPP Portal at **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Further, for more details can contact O/o, Case Worker, Executive Engineer's Office, PWD, Mangaluru Division, Mangaluru during official working hours. Contact No: 0824-2423169.

DIPR/DK/KSMCA/1471/25-26 dt.27.01.2026 **Sd/- Executive Engineer**

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder

Call our toll-free number **1800 102 1878**
Or write to us at **customercare@thehindu.co.in**
Scan the QR code to register your feedback

THE HINDU thehindubusinessline. FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR THE HINDU Young World THE HINDU

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU

Notice to the Respondent No. 21 & 22
Vide order dated: 09.01.2026
R.F.A. No. 1633/2022

Sri Meraj Ulla Huq..... Appellant
(By Sriyuths: G.R Anantharam & Others advs. for appellant)
V/S
Sri S Rajashekar & Ors.,..Respondents
(By Sriyuths: M. Siddaraju & S.B Halli Adv., for R1)

TO:

Respondents:

21. SRI K.V SHARIFF W/o Late Avaran Kotta Haji, R/at Swadeshi Timber Depot, Double Road, Chamarajanagar Town.

22. SMT. BEENA SHARIFF W/o K.V. Shariff, R/at No.14, Swadeshi Timber Depot, Double Road, Chamarajanagar Town.

Appeal from the Judgment & decree dated: **27.07.2022** passed in OS. **No.139/2015** on the file of the Senior Civil Judge & CJM, Chamarajanagar.

Notice is hereby given to you to appear in this court either in person or through Counsel duly instructed or through some one authorized by law, to act for you in the above appeal on 04.03.2026 in case you intend to contest the appeal. If you fail to appear, the same will be dealt with, heard & decided in your absence.

Issued under my hand & the seal of this court, this the 9TH DAY OF JANUARY 2026.

BY ORDER OF THE COURT
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU

Notice to the Respondent No. 4, 5 & 11
Vide order dated: 09.01.2026
R.F.A. No. 1633/2022

Sri Meraj Ulla Huq..... Appellant
(By Sriyuths: G.R Anantharam & Others advs. for appellant)
V/S
Sri S Rajashekar & Ors.,..Respondents
(By Sriyuths: M. Siddaraju & S.B Halli Adv., for R1)

TO:

Respondents:

04. SRI VIRAPRAKASH, S/o Late H.S Shivaswamy

05. SMT. LALITHA D/o Viraprakash, R-4 & R-5 Both Are R/at No.164, 4th Main, LIC Colony, Srirampura, Mysore- 570023.

11. SRI SANTHOSH KUMAR S/o Late C. Kumaraswamy R/at No.68, 6th Main, Saraswathi Club, V.M Doll Road, Kuvempunagara, Mysore-570 023.

Appeal from the Judgment & decree dated: **27.07.2022** passed in OS. **No.139/2015** on the file of the Senior Civil Judge & CJM, Chamarajanagar.

Notice is hereby given to you to appear in this court either in person or through Counsel duly instructed or through some one authorized by law, to act for you in the above appeal on 04.03.2026 in case you intend to contest the appeal. If you fail to appear, the same will be dealt with, heard & decided in your absence.

Issued under my hand & the seal of this court, this the 9th DAY OF JANUARY 2026

BY ORDER OF THE COURT
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, KENDRAPARA-JAJPUR

AT-CHANDIKHOLE, PO- SUNGUDA, Dist.: JAJPUR , Email - serw_kpd@yahoo.com

Office Order No. 213 / Dtd. 22/01/2026

CANCELLATION OF TENDER

The following tender of RCK-20/25 invited vide this office letter No. 4008 dtd 27.11.2025 & RCK 21/25 invited vide this office letter No.4026 dtd. 29.1.25 is hereby **cancelled** due to unavoidable circumstances.

RCK 20/25

1. Constn. of road from Pundilo to Canal Bandha Mahanga Palasudha road under MMSYTRIP in the Dist. of Kendrapara for the year 2025-26.

RCK 21/25

1. Constn. of road from L023- Kantilo to Suniti road under MMSY-DRR in the Dist. of Kendrapara for the year 2025-26.

O-2138: **Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur**

Government of Odisha E-Mail : serwcirclesbp@yahoo.com

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, SAMBALPUR.

E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. ROAD TENDER ONLINE RWCSBP-30/2025-26

1. Name of the Work :- Road Works
2. Total No. of works :- 10 nos Road work
3. Estimated cost :- Rs.162.88 lakhs to Rs.735.21 lakhs
4. Class of contractor :- 'B', 'A' & 'Spl'
5. Other details :- As mentioned in DTCN

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	
		From	To
1	2	3	4
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle , Sambalpur.	ROAD TENDER ONLINE RWCSBP-30/2025-26	31.01.2026 11.00 A.M	18.02.2026 05.00 P.M

Further details can be seen from the website : www.tendersorissa.gov.in

O-2057 : **Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sambalpur.**

ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ

ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಲೋ.ಇ./ಬಾ.ವಿ./ಪಿ.ಬಿ./ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ/2025–26/4383 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 27–01–2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಆದ್ಯಾದೇಶ 1999 – 2000 ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಆ್ಯಕ್ಟ 2000 ರ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ ಬಿಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ – 1, 2, 3, 4 & ಕೆ.ಸಿ. – 6 ನಿಯಮದನ್ವಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತರಾದ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ **ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯ** ಈ ಕೆಳಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ವರ್ಕ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ : **31379, 31104, 31102, 31529, 31568, 31589, 31700, 30859, 31126, 28023, 32609, 32611, 30578, 32587, 32586.**

ಪರಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಜಾತಿ : **31384, 28985, 31705.**

ಪರಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಪಂಗಡ : **31778.**

ಕ್ಯಾಟಗರಿ – 2(ಎ) : **31807.**

ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. **178.38** ಲಕ್ಷ ಹಾಗೂ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. **6.17** ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ವರೆಗಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅ) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆಗಾಗಿ ನಿಗಧಿ ಪಡಿಸಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕ	:	**12–02–2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.
ಬ) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ	:	**16–02–2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.
ಕ) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ	:	**17–02–2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.
ಡ) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ	:	**18–02–2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.

ವರ್ಕ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ : **SE0544/Call-2, SE0568/Call-2, SE0724/Call-2, SE0432/Call-2, SE0416/Call-2, SE0486/Call-2, SE0487/Call-2.**

ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಸರ್ವೀಸ್ ಮಾದರಿಯ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. **36.00** ಲಕ್ಷ ಹಾಗೂ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. **9.00** ಲಕ್ಷಗಳವರೆಗಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅ) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆಗಾಗಿ ನಿಗಧಿ ಪಡಿಸಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕ	:	**05–02–2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.
ಬ) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ	:	**06–02–2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.
ಕ) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ	:	**07–02–2026** ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ವಿವರವಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ವೈಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ವಿಳಾಸ : **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ರಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರರು,
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ.

ಡಿಐಪಿಆರ್/ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ/530/ಮಾಧಿಪಾಲ್/2025–26

IN THE COURT OF THE XXXI ADDL CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BANGALORE. (CCH-14)
P. & SC No.678/2025

BETWEEN: 1. Mrs. Viraj Vijay Divecha, aged 67 years, W/o Mr. Vijay Satish Divecha, D/o late Shirish Bapubhai Desai, Apt. No. 44, Sankey Court, 4th Floor, No.193, Sankey Road, Sadashivnagar, Bangalore-560 080. **2. Mrs. Jasmine Shirish Desai,** aged 61 years, W/o Mr. Sunil Ajit Vaidya, D/o late Shirish Bapubhai Desai, 12, Sage Brush Street, Markham, Ontario L6B 0K7, Canada. **Presently at:** Apt. No. 44, Sankey Court, 4th Floor, No. 193, Sankey Road, Sadashivnagar, Bangalore-560 080. **PETITIONERS.**

AND: Nil. RESPONDENT.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, the above/named petitioners have filed a petition under Section 276 of Indian Succession Act for grant of probate certificate of the unregistered Will in respect of movable and immovable property, morefully described in the schedule below, left behind by late Devayani Shirish Desai, who passed way testate on 09/10/2025. The petitioners are daughters of late Devayani Shirish Desai and beneficiaries of a movable and immoveable properties of late Devayani Shirish Desai by virtue of the said Will. If anyone has any claim over the schedule property or any objection in granting the probate certificate of the Will in favour of the aforesaid petitioners, they may appear in person, or by a pleader duly instructed and contest the petition before the City Civil Judge (CCH-14) at Bangalore on 06.03.2026 at 11.00.a.m. If there are no claims/ objection filed, the Hon'ble Court shall proceed to dispase off the petition as exparte.

SCHEDULE 'A PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the residential apartment bearing No. 44, Sankey Court, 4th Floor, 193 Sankey Road, Sadashivnagar, Bangalore-560 080.

SCHEDULE 'B' PROPERTY

Mutual funds with 360ONE (Portfolio enclosed).

SCHEDULE 'C PROPERTY

ISIN Code	Scrip Name	Account Description	Balance	Value
INE1NPP01017	SIEMENS ENERGY INDIA LTD-EQ	Beneficiary	2913.000	9,070208.10
INE003A01004	SIEMENS LTD- EQ NEW FV Rs.2	Beneficiary	2913.000	9687.664.40

Total Value of Holding (Price as on 26-NOV-2025) Rs. 18,737,872.50.
Given under my hand and seal of the Court, this 9 day of January 2026 at Bangalore.

By Order of the Court
Senior Sheristedar, City Civil Court Bangalore.

Advocate for Petitioners: **M. Arun Ponappa,** IInd Floor, Kasturi Complex, No.76, Mission Road, Bangalore-560 027.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MINOR IRRIGATION & GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT, DIVISION, DHARWAD.

SECTION 1: INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)
(Two Cover System), KW-1,2,3,4
Reg : This office tender Notification No. 13/2025-26 Dated: 27-01-2026

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division, Dharwad, invites tenders for **Dharwad, Gadag, Hangal and Ranebennur** Sub Division, comes under various HOA in Standard Bid Document **KW-1,2,3,4** through e-procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka, viz., **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from eligible contractors for the work under various Head of Account on Item Rate basis. Maximum Estimate Amount: **Rs. 995.00** Lakhs, Maximum E.M.D amount **Rs.12.10** Lakhs and Minimum Estimate Amount: **Rs.1.00** Lakhs, Minimum E.M.D amount **Rs.2500.00**; Period of downloading tender documents from e-procurement portal is from **28/01/2026** upto 30 Days step by step. And any other Corrigendum/Addendum and Postponement of Notification, Changes in the dates, if any will be published only through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov. in.** Other details may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours on all working days. Details published on the e-procurement website @ **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** are final.

Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
M.I & G.W.D. DIVISION, DHARWAD

GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

No.5166/PW/EEI/ID/JE(P)-33/2025-2026 Puducherry, the 27.01.2026

PRESS NOTICE FOR e-Tender

The Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division, PWD, Puducherry invites on behalf of the President of India, Online Percentage Rate Bids from the eligible contractors/firms for the following Work(s):

1. Tender No.225/PW/IRRN/2025-2026 **Name of Work**: Coastal protection measures for immediate control of sea erosion. Sub Work4:Balance work for Coastal protection measures for immediate control of sea erosion at Ganapathy Chettikulam Puducherry. **Estimate Cost:** Rs.5,50,25,863/- (inclusive of GST). **Earnest Money:** Rs.11,00,517/- **Period of Completion:** Six (6) Months (Including Monsoon period).
2. Tender No.226/PW/IRRN/2025-2026 **Name of Work:** Coastal protection measures for immediate control of sea erosion. Sub Work2:Balance work for Coastal protection measures for immediate control of sea erosion at Pillaichavady(North) Puducherry. **Estimate Cost:** Rs.5,40,13,092/- (inclusive of GST). **Earnest Money:** Rs.10,80,262/- **Period of Completion:** Six (6) Months (Including Monsoon period).

Last time & date of submission of bid on (or) before 04.00. P.M. on **17.02.2026**. date & time of Opening of Bid 11.00 A.M. on **18.02.2026**.

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website. **www.pudutenders.gov.in**

No.764/DIP/AD(Press)/2025-2026 **EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION**

TAMIL NADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED

Kagithapuram - 639 136. Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu.

TNPL Unit-I Invites Tender for sale of following Waste and Scrap materials on One Time Sale & Six months rate contract / "as is where is" basis.

Tender No.	Description	Due date
2025050	Redundant Equipments from Mechanical Bagasse Pulp Plant	09.02.2026
2025051	Effluent Filter Cake	13.02.2026
2025052	Waste Paper (Kraft Cuttings, Board, Boxes & Pasted Paper)	13.02.2026

Corrigendum if any will be issued in NIC Portal only. Detailed Terms & conditions are available in tender document at our website : **https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**

DIPR/464/Tender/2026 *TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper*

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD

Jalabhavana, 5th Floor, No.5, 1st Stage, 1st Phase, BTM Layout, Bannerughatta Main Road, Bengaluru-560029

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

No: KWB/TEC/CE(B)/PAVAGADA SPL-T-AMRUT 2.0 /1644/2025-26, Dated: 22.01.2026

Name of the Work: Tender for Improvements of Water Supply System to Pavagada town with Tungabhadra dam (RWSSD Tapping Point) as source under AMRUT 2.0 including Operation & Maintenance for a period of 5 Years (including 1-year DLP) through design, build, operation and transfer (DBOT) mode"

Indent No.: KUWSDB/2025-26/WS/Work_INDENT480

For further details may be obtained through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (B),
KUWS & D Board, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/5219/CCL/2025-26

ಸಮಗ್ರ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ
"ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಭವಿಷ್ಯದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ" 2025–26
ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು (ಆಡಳಿತ) ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಯೋಜನಾ ಸಮನ್ವಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಶಾಲಾ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಸಮಗ್ರ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ–ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ.

ssa16chikkaballapur@gmail.com, Phone No : 08156-273395

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಸಶಿಕ/ಸಪ್ರೌಶಾವಿಸಾಖ/01/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:23.01.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಸಮಗ್ರ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಆವಿಷ್ಕಾರ್ ಇನ್ನೋವೇಷನ್ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 07 ಶಾಲೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಟಿಂಕರಿಂಗ್ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 03 ಶಾಲೆಗಳು ಒಟ್ಟು 10 ಶಾಲೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಲ್ಯಾಬ್ ಪರಿಕರಗಳನ್ನು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮಾಡುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಅರ್ಹ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಲು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ. **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ 05.02.2026 ಸಮಯ ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆ**

ಸಹಿ/– (ವಿ.ರಮೇಶ್), ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು(ಆಡಳಿತ) ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಯೋಜನಾ ಸಮನ್ವಯಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಸಮಗ್ರ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ–ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ/ಆರ್.ಓ.ಸಂ/ಖ್ಯೆ:388/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Joint Commissioner, Zone-1, Mayohall Premises, Residency Road, Bengaluru - 560001.

No: BCCC/JC-1/TEND/05/2025-26 Date: 27-01-2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)

The Joint Commissioner (Zone-1), BCCC, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible Contractors / Firm registered in BCCC or equivalent registration with Labour Department or any State Government Organizations for the Work detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Availing Graduates / Diploma Civil Engineers for Bengaluru Central City Corporation. **Amount Put to Tender (Excluding GST) (Rs. in Lakhs): 238.06, EMD Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 3.57**

Calendar of Events: 1) Tender document can be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 30-01-2026. 2)** Pre Bid Meeting will be held on **06-02-2026 at 16.00 Hours in the Office of the Joint Commissioner, Zone-1, BCCC, Residency Road, Mayohall Premises, Bengaluru. 3)** Tenders must be Submitted Online through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **on or before 16.00 Hours on 16-02-2026. 4)** Technical Bids will be Opened on the Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in at the Office of the Joint Commissioner, Zone-1, BCCC, Bengaluru on 18-02-2026 at 16.00 Hours.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Joint Commissioner, Zone-1, BCCC.

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(A government of Karnataka Enterprises)

Office of the Executive Engineer, Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited, MLBC Division No.1, Ramdurg.-591123

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KPPP PORTAL ONLY)

Ref: EE/ KNNL/ MLBC-1/DB/Tender /8 Tank Filling/2025-26: 1845 ,Dated:23/01/2026

On behalf of the Managing Director Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Limited, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer, KNNL, MLBCC, Division No.1 Ramdurg, Belagavi District in Karnataka State invites tender KW-4 Standard Bid document on LUMP SUM TURN KEY basis on KPP portal for the "(8 Tanks filling-Stage-I) on Turnkey basis" (Indent No. 3924) work from the registered Valid KPWD Class-I contractor. The intending bidders can submit bids as an individual / Joint Venture.

Approximately Amount Put To tender : Rs 39.22 Crores (Excluding GST) EMD Rs.0.392 Crores (No of Works : 01)

1.The Contractor can have access to the e-tender document, i.e. the Tender schedules, bid documents and other documents in the web site https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in on payment of transaction fee (non-refundable) from : 23-01-2026 to 25-02-2026 upto 17.00 Hours. The Pre-bid meeting will be on 02-02-2026 in the office of the Managing Director, Karnataka Neeravari Nigma Limited, 4th Floor, Coffe Board Building, Bangalore at 12.30 pm. The queries if any are to be sent by the intending bidders to the Executive Engineer on or before 10-02-2026, 17.00 Hrs. Last date of bid submission 25-02-2026 17.00 Hrs. Technical bid opening on 26-02-2026 17.30 Hrs. Financial bid opening 05-03-2026 17.00 Hrs will be done after approval of technical bid. Further information can be had from the office of the Executive Engineer, KNNL, MLBCC, Division No.1 Ramdurg, Belagavi District, State: Karnataka during office hours. Phone No:08335-242143 & e-mail Id:ee.knnlmlbc1rmd@gmail.com Other conditions are as published in KPP portal only. Further if any Corrigendum/Addendum or any modifications of this tender will be published in the web site of e-procurement only. Stipulated period for completion of work 18 Month (Including Monsoon).

Sd/-(S Y Hokrani)
Executive Engineer,
KNNL, MLBCC, Division No.1Ramdurg.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1700/KSMCA/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Belagavi

No. PWD/BGM/TA/AE/TENDER/2025-26/6794, Date: 26.01.2026
Ref.: PWD/BGM/TA/AE/Tender/2025-26/6544, Date: 14.01.2026

CORRIGENDUM-01(KPPP)

This office has invited item-wise tender under reference on K.P.P. Portal. Part-3 Serial No.67,81 & 82 of this notification to be read as follows.

The last date for receipt of tender is on 12-02-2026 up to 4.30 PM, The date for opening of Technical Bid is on 13-02-2026 after 4.45 PM. For more information contact the office of the undersigned or visit www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in after 26.01.2026.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Public Works Department Division,
Belagavi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1704/KSMCA/2025-26

Karnataka Food & Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd.

(Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.16/I, MILLERS TANK BED AREA, BANGALORE-560 052
Ph: 080-2226 0932 / 2209 6555 / 2209 6512
E-mail: mdkfcsc@yahoo.com

No.KFCSC/ADMN/staff/D.V./88/2025-26/4051 Date: 27.01.2026.

NOTIFICATION

The Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation Limited has published the provisional selection list of candidates for Senior Assistant post, based on the cut-off marks of the candidates, in the KFCSC website https://kfcsc.karnataka.gov.in. on Date: 27.01.2026. The objections with respect to the provisional selection list if any, can be submitted through an application with appropriate details and documents mentioning "Senior Assistant- provisional selection list objection" in the subject line along with the name and the application number to The Managing Director, Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation Limited, No.16/1, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasanthanagar, Bengaluru-560052. Objections should be submitted within date 03.02.2026 by 5:30 p.m. Objection submitted after the specified date will not be considered for any reason.

Sd/-
Managing Director

Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited

(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (RE-TENDER)

(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

No.: CGM(Tech)/DGM(APCC & Proc)/EEP/AEE2/2025-26/5615-622 Date: 27.01.2026

KPTCL re-invites Bids on electronic mode against the following Tender Enquiry Nos. as detailed below:

Sl. No.	Tender Enquiry Number and Description
1	Tender Enquiry No: **KPTCL/2025-26/IND0269** Design, Manufacture, Testing and supply of **907 Nos. of 66kV class Current Transformers of ratio 400-200/1-1-1A and 170 Nos. of Marshalling Box** conforming to KPTCL technical specification, F.O.R.D at Store/Site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading. Availability of Bid documents in KPP Portal: **On or after 29.01.2026 @15:00Hrs.** Last date & time for receipt of Bids: **02.03.2026 @15:00Hrs.**
2	Tender Enquiry No: **KPTCL/2025-26/IND0270** Design, Manufacture, Testing and supply of total quantity of **771 Nos. of 66kV class Current Transformers of various ratios ie., 1000-600/1-1-1A, 200-100/1-1-1A,1600-1000/ 1-1-1A, 800-400/1-1-1A, 1000-800/1-1-1A, 1200-800/1-1-1A, and 86 Nos. of Marshalling Box** conforming to KPTCL technical specification, F.O.R.D at Store/Site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading. Availability of Bid documents in KPP Portal: **On or after 30.01.2026 @15:00Hrs.** Last date & time for receipt of Bids: **03.03.2026@15:00Hrs.**
3	Tender Enquiry No: **KPTCL/2025-26/IND0271** Design, Manufacture, Testing and supply of **409 Nos. of 110kV class Current Transformers and 121 Nos. of Marshalling Box** conforming to KPTCL technical specification, F.O.R.D at Store/Site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading. Availability of Bid documents in KPP Portal: **On or after 31.01.2026 @15:00Hrs.**Last date & time for receipt of Bids: **04.03.2026@15:00Hrs.**

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink **"E Procurement KPTCL"** or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Any extension of Due date for Bid submission will be intimated in the KPP Portal.** Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours.

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the Bids.

Sd/- Chief General Manager (Tech),
KPTCL, Corporate Office, 2nd Floor,
Kaveri Bhavan, Bengaluru – 560 009.

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, JOANNA Gloria, d/o; Anthony Thomas, r/o: Flat No.411, A Block, DS Max Sky Grand, Doddakempaiah, Blr –560043. Have changed my name as Joanna Gloria Anthony.

I, ARIF Rottel R/a #114, Fathima House, M H Layout, Nandi Nagar, Chikkabanavara, Bengaluru-560090 have changed my minor daughter name from Safwana R to Safwana Fathima Rottel vide affidavit dt: 22.01.2026 sworn before Notary Vatsala, B'luru

I, ARIF Rottel R/a #114, Fathima House, M H Layout, Nandi Nagar, Chikkabanavara, Bengaluru-560090 have changed my minor son name from Mohammed Daanish to Mohammed Daanish Rottel vide affidavit dt: 22.01.2026 sworn before Notary Vatsala, B'luru

I, ATEIFA also known as Atheefa Moin Khan W/o Moin Ahmed Khan R/o 298, 7th Cross, LT South City, Lakshmi Layout, Arkere, Bengaluru-560076 Karnataka have changed my name to Ateefa Moin Khan vide affidavit dated 27/01/2026 before Meer Hassan Notary Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, DAISY SIMON, Aged about 57 years, D/o.

CACHE

The impact of India-EU FTA for AI and semiconductor tech

The India-EU Free Trade Agreement moves beyond supply chains to operationalise joint R&D in advanced semiconductor integration. It also formally links the European AI Office with India's National AI Mission

Vasudevan Mukunth

In a milestone, India and the European Union (EU) have hailed the conclusion of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) while launching a 'Comprehensive Strategic Agenda' for 2030. Among other measures, the pact moves beyond supply chains to operationalise joint R&D in advanced semiconductor "heterogeneous integration" and chip design. It also formally links the European AI Office with India's National AI Mission to jointly develop safe, human-centric AI and take advantage of what the agreement called India's vast "multilingual datasets" and Europe's research infrastructure to secure strategic autonomy in critical technologies.

Huge boost: Semiconductors being inspected at the Tessolve Semiconductor Private Limited, at Electronic City-Phase II, in Bengaluru on September 19, 2025. MURALI KUMAR. K

The three diplomatic phases

The AI and semiconductor aspects represent the maturation of three diplomatic phases. The first phase began with the 'India-EU Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025'. At this stage, discussions on "technology" were largely confined to general matters of cybersecurity, 5G networks, and data protection and there was no specific mechanism for a more concrete collaboration between the bloc and India on hardware such as semiconductors, or specific AI model development.

In the second phase, around 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and EU President Ursula von der Leyen launched the India-EU Trade and Technology Council. This body in turn created the Working Group 1 on Strategic Technologies, which moved the relationship from diplomacy to involving technical experts. In fact the new deal has credited this group with managing its "technology and innovation" aspect.

In the third and final phase, in 2023, India and EU signed the Semiconductor Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This MoU was primarily defensive in the sense that it focused on improving the resilience of supply chains and on providing early warnings of shortages. Between 2023 and the present deal, the MoU evolved into a more 'offensive' partnership, so to speak, with a focus on creating new technologies, including through designing and prototyping, in addition to monitoring existing supply chains.

On 'heterogenous integration'

Perhaps the most significant technical detail in the document is "heterogeneous integration" because it recognises that India is years away from building cutting-edge logic fabrication facilities, for example, those that manufacture chips with nodes of 2-3 nm, and thus pivots to "advanced packaging". Heterogenous integration involves stacking different types of chips, such as logic, memory, and sensors, into a single package. Such combinations are critical for AI. Contemporary AI accelerators like Nvidia's Graphics Processing Units (GPUs) bank more on how memory is packaged next to the processor instead of only the raw transistor size. By targetting this, the EU and India are trying to capture the value-added segment of the supply chain that is also less capital-intensive than a fabrication facility but which is just as critical for performance.

The agenda also explicitly connects semiconductor manufacturing to AI utility as the text says the deal will focus "on design and prototyping for AI applications", thus creating a vertical market. While in 2023 the focus was on "making chips for cars", following a crisis in their availability, the new goal is to make chips that AI models require.

India possesses roughly 20% of the world's chip design talent (on the flip side most of them work for U.S.-based firms like Intel and Qualcomm). The EU has the research infrastructure, such as IMEC in Belgium and Fraunhofer-Gessellschaft in Germany, but lacks the design scale. And the deal effectively creates a mechanism to unify India's designer capital with the EU's physical capital, to create indigenous AI hardware and reduce their reliance on US intellectual property.

Finally, the operational vehicles for the deal's semiconductor strategy are the so-called Blue Valleys – a regulatory exclave that aligns Indian with European standards, allowing component manufacturers in India to flow directly into European supply chains without new certification requirements. In other words, the Blue Valleys will effectively extend the EU Single Market technical standards to Indian soil.

A common market for AI

Likewise, the AI section of the new deal also sets up a "common market" for AI where Indian data can flow into European models while having European regulations govern Indian AI companies (this is an example of the Brussels effect, whereby the EU exports its laws outside its borders through market mechanisms instead of direct force).

Previously, if the EU had a technical question about Indian AI policy, it would go through diplomatic channels (specifically, the External Action Service to the Ministry of External Affairs). The deal now indicates a direct line: the European AI Office, which is the EU's regulator, can interact directly with the IndiaAI Safety Institute, India's technical auditor. As a result, the technical staff at these agencies could have a formal mandate to coordinate without requiring political permissions for every interaction.

Further, perhaps the most concrete part of the AI section of the deal is the point about "testing and evaluation". Currently, the world doesn't have a common definition of what constitutes safe AI. The EU's priority might be gender bias while India's might be political neutrality – which means a developer will have to make their model pass two tests ahead of clearance. But now, by collaborating on testing, the two agencies will likely co-author and rationalise the checklists for the models. So if the European AI Office develops a specific mathematical test to measure the rate or scope of hallucinations in a large language model, it can share that test with the IndiaAI Safety Institute for India to adopt. In fact, the point of linking these agencies is to eventually reach a point where one accepts a safety certificate issued by the other. Going ahead this will require the agencies to align their audit procedures and staff training.

For Indians this could be a civil liberties backdoor of sorts. That is, because European audit manuals are strongly rooted in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights, Indian users might unknowingly gain digital protections that the domestic political climate currently sidelines. EU safety benchmarks aggressively penalise algorithmic bias against minorities and restrict invasive biometric surveillance. If Indian developers must clear these hurdles to ensure their models can be exported to Europe, the AI products deployed domestically will be embedded with European regulatory attitudes. Thus Indian users could interact with AI agents that are technically constrained from reinforcing majoritarian narratives or profiling of vulnerable communities.

However, there is also the possibility of this opportunity devolving into a stratified ecosystem akin to India's pharmaceutical sector, where some manufacturers rigorously adhere to safety protocols for exports to U.S. and European markets while cutting corners for domestic supply. That is, Indian firms might engineer 'clean' and more bias-free algorithms specifically for the EU market to secure lucrative contracts while deploying invasive or unrestricted versions at home, where enforcement remains lax.

Financial instruments

In order to fuel all these ambitions, the agenda musters two financial instruments. First, the text requires both sides "explore options for association of India to Horizon Europe". If this happens, it would elevate India to the highest tier of partnership available to non-EU nations and allow Indian entities to lead consortia and compete directly for grants from the EU's €95.5-billion research budget (₹10.4 lakh crore). This could be a bonus for the semiconductor sector as it will allow Indian chip startups to bypass the often risk-averse domestic capital markets.

Second, and on a related note, the deal also places the European Innovation Council at the helm of a new startup partnership. The Council specialises in what it calls "patient capital" for high-risk technologies such as quantum computing and novel chip architectures that traditional venture capitalists often avoid. By linking the Council with the Start-up India platform, the agreement creates a dedicated cross-border funding corridor for 'hard' technologies and fills a gap left by private investors, and could help ensure the deal's design ambitions are backed by the necessary funds.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"I am starving. Are you ready to leave?"

"No, I have a couple of things to do."

"...make it snappy, will you? We're late as it is."

"Make it snappy? What does it mean?"

"It's an informal expression meaning 'hurry up'. For example, the manager needs 20 copies of this article. Make it snappy, will you?"

"I don't want to sit here all day. Make it snappy."

"I'd like you to go through this document. Make it snappy."

"Drive me to the airport. And make it snappy. Does that sound OK?"

"Yes. But remember, it's an informal expression. Now get dressed, will you? You don't have to wear anything snappy."

"...snappy again?"

"When you say that somebody is a snappy dresser, it means...."

"...let me guess. It probably means someone who wears very fashionable clothes. Someone who dresses very well."

"Exactly! Some of our cricket players are snappy dressers."

"With the kind of money they make, people expect them to be snappy dressers. My Principal is no snappy dresser."

"He may not be a snappy dresser, but he is snappy most of the time!"

"Not snappy again!"

"When you accuse someone of being snappy, it means he/she speaks to people in an unfriendly manner."

"Like your friend Bala? He tends to be snappy most of the time."

"Yes, he tends to be snappy when his blood pressure goes up."

"The snappy old clerk who used to sit in the Principal's office has retired."

"I am sure the students were happy to see him go."

"By the way, does 'snap at' mean the same thing as snappy?"

"I guess you could say that. When you snap at someone, you speak to them in a sharp, unfriendly manner."

"The new bank manager tends to snap at people."

"When I asked my boss for a raise, he snapped at me."

"When I asked the theatre manager if there were any tickets available, instead of snapping at me, he gave me two tickets."

"That was nice. How was the movie?"

"It was quite good. Have you seen it?"

"I plan to see it next week. I've heard the songs. They are quite snappy."

"Snappy again! What does it mean in this context?"

"Why don't you guess?"

"OK. You said that the songs were snappy. Well, the songs in the movie that I saw were quite catchy. They were lively and made you feel like dancing."

"Good job! Anything that is snappy is performed in a lively manner."

"I see. When the singer began to sing a sad song, everyone booed him. The audience wanted something snappy."

"That's a very good example. For the annual day function, my boss wants us to put up a snappy production."

"Do you think you can do it?"

"No problem. It should be a snap. When you say that something is a snap, it means it can be done easily. For example, answering Sujatha's question was a snap."

Published in The Hindu on June 8, 1999.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Marking the anniversary of Jane Austen's seminal novel, this quiz probes *Pride and Prejudice* from its thematic artistry to its publication quirks

Prathmesh Kher

QUESTION 1
What was the working title Austen gave to *Pride and Prejudice*?

QUESTION 2
Which 19th-century novelist's work influenced Austen's ironic treatment of social manners?

QUESTION 3
Who bore the financial risk for the publication of the first edition of *Pride and Prejudice*?

QUESTION 4
Pride and Prejudice was originally published with a credit attributed to "the Author of *Sense and Sensibility*". What was the credit on *Sense and Sensibility*?

QUESTION 5
What is the now-acclaimed opening line of the book?

Visual Question:
Identify this 1985 television adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* that aired on Doordarshan. PRASAR BHARATI

Questions and Answers to previous day's daily quiz: 1. Name the four countries across which the Kurds are found. **Ans: Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran**
2. This religious minority among the Kurds was targeted by the Islamic State. **Ans: Yazidis**
3. This post-World War I treaty promised Kurdish autonomy but was never ratified. **Ans: The Treaty of Sevres**
4. Abdullah Ocalan abandon Marxist-Leninism for this model. **Ans: Democratic Confederalism**
5. This large-scale chemical attack was carried out by the Baathist regime carry against Iraqi Kurds in the 1980s. **Ans: Halabja massacre**
6. This Kurdish group was suspected of assassinating Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme. **Ans: Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)**
7. The decree granting Kurds national language status was issued in this year. **Ans: 2026**
8. This all-female Kurdish militia gained global attention during the fight against IS. **Ans: The YPJ**
Visual: This medieval Kurdish commander became a central figure in Islamic resistance to the Crusades. **Ans: Saladin**
Early Birds: Tamal Biswas| Suchit Narottam| Tito Shiladitya| Arun Kumar Singh| G. P. Ramachandran

Word of the day

Clamant:
conspicuously and offensively loud; given to vehement outcry; demanding attention

Synonyms: crying, exigent, insistent, blatant, clamorous, strident, vociferous

Usage: *There is a clamant public demand for a new law to protect stray dogs.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/clamantpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈklæmənt/, /ˈkleɪmənt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

SIR travel: Amid high flight rates, migrants seek special trains

Estimates by associations such as Nep India Foundation, suggest that nearly two lakh Bengali migrant workers live in Bengaluru, many yet to travel back to their home districts for SIR verification

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

With flight tickets to Siliguri and Kolkata crossing ₹12,000 amid a rush for Special Intensive Revision (SIR) verification, migrant workers from West Bengal employed in Bengaluru have requested the government to run temporary special trains, pointing out that existing trains are fully booked till March.

Estimates by associations such as the Nep India Foundation, which represents migrants from the North Bengal belt, and the Karnataka Bengali Kalyan Samiti suggest that nearly two lakh Bengali migrant workers live in Bengaluru, many of who are yet to travel back to their home districts.

Migrants wait to board a train at Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal railway station in Bengaluru on Monday. ALLEN EGENUSE J

Sanjith Biswakaran, president of the Nep Indian Foundation, said that for workers heading to the North Bengal belt, including districts such as Darjeeling, Cooch Behar, and Malda – New Jalpaiguri Junction near Siliguri remains the primary rail access point on long-distance routes. "Between Bengaluru and Siliguri or New Jalpaiguri, Railways operates a limited number of weekly long-distance and express services, with journey times ranging between 41 and 45 hours. These trains run with restricted frequency, and tickets are fully booked till March," he pointed out.

> We usually go home only once a year, and the cost of a flight is equal to a month's salary, or even more
>
> **KISHORE BISWAS**
> Security guard

For other parts of West Bengal, particularly Howrah near Kolkata and Nadia, where a large number of migrant workers' families are based, there are comparatively more options, with over 10 weekly trains connecting Bengaluru to Howrah and nearby stations. However, workers said seats on these routes are also unavailable currently, leaving them with only flights as an alternative. Workers said airfares are too high and unaffordable and amount to nearly two months' wages. "We usually go home only once a year, and the cost of a flight is equal to a month's salary, or even more," said Kishore Biswas, a security guard working in Varthur. He added that many workers are anxious about the possibility of having to travel twice, once for hearings and again for verification, something they cannot afford on their current incomes.

Another security guard, Jameel Ismail, who works in Marathahalli, pointed out that travelling home is not a short exercise. "This will take more than a week, including travel, paperwork and the return journey," he said, adding that availing leave is difficult for them, as some employers insist on immediate replacements, even though a few have shown flexibility in this case.

Over the past few days, several migrant workers said they have been waiting at the Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal (SMVT) railway station in the hope of securing tickets.

Railway officials, however, told *The Hindu* that while there has been more than usual crowd at the station at specific train timings, they did not want to specifically link it to SIR-related travel and declined to comment further.

No proposal to extend Namma Metro to Doddaballapur, govt. tells Assembly

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

There is currently no proposal to extend the Namma Metro line to Doddaballapur, the Karnataka government informed the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday.

Not beyond KIA

Replying during Question Hour to BJP member Dheeraj Muniraju, Minister for Revenue Krishna Byre Gowda, answering on behalf of Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, said there were no plans to extend the Metro line beyond Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) at Devanahalli. He added that the Namma Metro line connecting the city to KIA is expected to become operational by 2027.

The Namma Metro line connecting the city to KIA is expected to become operational by 2027. r. K. MURALI KUMAR

Mr. Gowda explained that any proposal to extend the metro to Doddaballapur would first have to be placed before the expert committee under the Comprehensive Mobility Plan (CMP) for evaluation and approval. While the government may refer such a proposal to the CMP at an appropriate time, no such plan is currently under consideration.

Raising the issue, Mr. Muniraju argued that extending the metro to Doddaballapur was essential, citing the presence of several national and global firms in the area. He also pointed to major projects such as the KWIN City project and Foxconn's facilities located in the town.

In a separate reply to BJP MLA Vedavyas Kamath, Mr. Gowda said the government has approved a ₹35 lakh proposal to provide basic facilities in stadiums within the Mangaluru City Assembly constituency.

Illegal sale of liquor

Responding to a question from BJP MLA Aihole Duryodhana Mahalingappa, Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur said the department had taken steps to curb the illegal sale of liquor in grocery shops. Mr. Mahalingappa urged strict action against officials, alleging that illegal liquor sales in rural areas were leading to addiction among even young children. Mr. Thimmapur stated that 357 raids were conducted in the Raibagh constituency over the last two years (2023-25). Cases were registered against 322 individuals, and authorities seized 370 litres of liquor and seven vehicles.

Shivakumar to call a meeting on problems related to allotment of sites in Arkavathi Layout

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who also holds the Bengaluru City development portfolio, on Tuesday told the Legislative Assembly that he would soon convene a meeting of officials and legislators to look into the pending issue of some Arakavathi Layout allottees, especially land losing farmers, not getting sites in the layout formed by the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) about 20 years ago.

Replying to a call attention notice tabled by BJP member Muniraju, Mr. Shivakumar observed that it was a matter of concern that some of those who have been allotted sites in the Arkavathi Layout, especially the land losing farmers who had been allotted sites as per norms, were yet to get sites.

DCM D. K. Shivakumar, during the state Assembly session, at Vidhana Soudha, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. THE HINDU

"Due to various legal issues the sites allotted to some land-losing farmers do not exist. The Justice K.N. Keshavanarayana Committee is looking into the issue. I will soon call a meeting of all the officials concerned and the elected representatives to discuss the ways and means of resolving the issue," he said.

Earlier, Mr. Muniraju alleged that the sites allotted to land-losing farmers were in possession of others due to various legal issues and problem of re-do (under which some lands notified for acquisition have been left out).

GBA seeks time extension for SEC for voter list verification

CIVIC POLLS

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Greater Bengaluru Authority Chief Commissioner M. Maheshwar Rao, on Tuesday directed the Election Department to seek an extension of time from the State Election Commission for election-related work connected with the upcoming GBA city corporation polls. The decision follows concerns raised by political party representatives over the tight timelines for voter list verification.

Mr. Rao gave the directions while chairing a meeting with representatives of political parties at the GBA head office to discuss the revised circular issued by the State Election Commission on the publication of ward-wise draft voters' lists for the five city corporations under the GBA. The draft voters' list for the GBA elections was published on January 19, following which the State Election Commission released a revised election schedule on January 22. Election-related activities are currently under way in the respective city corporations in line with the revised schedule.

During the meeting, representatives of political parties requested that additional time be granted to complete mandatory election processes, citing practical difficulties. Following this, Mr. Rao instructed officials to write to the State Election Commission seeking an extension. He also directed officials to promptly address any issues arising in any of the five city corporations and to ensure public awareness about Booth Level Officers (BLOs) conducting door-to-door verification across all city corporations.

Special Commissioner (Election) R. Ramachandran said that the draft voters' list had already been published and that BLOs were currently visiting households to receive applications in prescribed formats. He requested political party representatives to encourage voters to verify their details in the draft voters' list, including inclusion of names, corrections and other changes, to help prepare an error-free final voters' list.

Mr. Ramachandran also said during the meeting that the State Election Commission has stipulated that each polling station should cater to a maximum of 1,500 voters, and that polling stations would be set up accordingly in all wards. Political party representatives also sought more time to ensure that Assembly voters falling under a particular ward are not duplicated across multiple ward voters' lists, to match ward-level voters' lists with corresponding assembly voters' lists, and to incorporate eligible voters into the ward draft voters' list as Supplementary List-1, based on supplementary Assembly voters' lists published after October 1, 2025, using the online From-To Matrix software.

Leopard caught in Hubballi

HUBBALLI: After over a month-long vigil and efforts, the Forest Department finally managed to capture the leopard that had strayed into Hubballi.

THE INSTITUTE OF Company Secretaries of India
भारतीय कम्पनी सचिव संस्थान
IN PURSUIT OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE
Statutory body under an Act of Parliament
(Under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Corporate Affairs)
ICSI House, 22, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi –110003
Phone : 011-45341036/92 email : hr.dept@icsi.edu Website : www.icsi.edu

ADVT. NO. 01/2026
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) is a statutory body set up under an Act of Parliament, the Company Secretaries Act, 1980, to regulate and develop the profession of Company Secretaries in India. The ICSI invites applications for the following post at its Headquarters at New Delhi/ Noida:-

S. no	Name of the Post & Location	Pay Level as per 7th CPC Pay Matrix (Rs.)	Gross Salary per Annum (Rs. in Lakhs)	Max. Age (as on 01.01.2026)	No. of Posts
1.	Chauffeur (New Delhi / Noida)	Level 2 (19900-63200)	4.75	35 years	01

For further details viz. qualification, experience, procedure for submission of application etc., please visit website **https://www.icsi.edu/careers/** on and from **28.01.2026.** Interested candidates may **apply only through electronic mode (Online).** Last date for submission of application (Online) is 18.02.2026. Reservation policy will be applicable as adopted by the "ICSI" in its Service Rules. The "ICSI" reserves the right to increase/decrease or even not to fill up any post as per its requirement.

https://www.icsi.edu/careers/

VISAKHAPATNAM | GMR
NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)
GMR Vishakhapatnam International Airport Ltd. (GVIAL) invites tender for Package,
1. Hiring of Agency for Security Service at Bhogapuram International Airport for a period of 10 years and further extendable up to 5 years.
2. Deployment of Private Security Agency for undertaking non-core security functions at Bhogapuram International Airport for 3 years' contract period.
For details, interested parties may download the Tender document free of charge from gmrvisakhapatnamairport.com/tender.aspx between 28.01.2026 to 03.02.2026.
VIA'21/PREM ASSOCIATES

Timings
BENGALURU

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28	
RISE 06:46	SET 18:19
RISE 13:39	SET 02:01
THURSDAY, JAN. 29	
RISE 06:46	SET 18:19
RISE 14:40	SET 03:06
FRIDAY, JAN. 30	
RISE 06:46	SET 18:20
RISE 15:46	SET 04:11

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	30	14
Bengaluru	29	17

Bengaluru Today
26°C The weather will be mostly dry. Day will be comfortable. Night will be cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm. Night also will be cool.

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THE HINDU
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JNCASR and Bengaluru firm tie-up for smarter cooling of aviation batteries

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

This collaboration is expected to address challenges in drone performance, safety and operational endurance

The Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) along with a Bengaluru-based company will be developing advanced thermal materials and thermoelectric devices for improving the storage and conversion in aviation batteries. JNCASR has tied up with Dreamfly Innovations Pvt. Ltd which specialises in thermal battery technology which is expected to help translate fundamental materials research into deployable thermal technologies for real-world aviation platforms.

This collaboration is expected to address critical challenges in drone performance, safety and operational endurance.

Major bottleneck

According to the Department of Science and Technology, effective heat management remains a major bottleneck for high-energy-density lithium-based batteries used in the aviation industry.

Excessive heat generation during high-power operation can compromise efficiency, reduce battery lifespan, and pose serious safety risks.

"While passive thermal management strategies such as Phase Change Materials (PCMs) are attractive due to their low weight and zero power consumption, their widespread adoption has been limited by the inherently poor thermal conductivity of conventional PCMs. As a result, heat generated by the battery is not absorbed rapidly enough, leading to temperature rise and accelerated degradation of battery components," the department said.

It further added that a common approach to overcome this limitation involves incorporating high-thermal-conductivity additives to form composite PCMs. "However, such composites often suffer from long-term stability issues, including additive agglomeration during repeated thermal cycling, which ultimately degrades performance and reliability," it added.

MoU signed

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two, which will not only help in developing advanced thermal materials and thermoelectric devices for improving thermal management (storage and conversion) in the aviation batteries, but also address current challenges through materials-level innovation.

While Prof. Kanishka Biswas's laboratory in JNCASR will share its expertise in materials design, synthesis, advanced characterisation, and thermal transport measurements, Dreamfly Innovations' will share its proficiency in aviation battery engineering and system-level integration.

The advanced thermal materials will be engineered for high thermal conductivity to rapidly absorb excess heat during high-load operation, maintain battery temperatures within optimal operating windows, and enable lightweight thermal regulation without compromising long-term stability.

ಆರ್ಟಿಸನ್ಸ್ ಬಜಾರ್
Artisans Bazaar
There is a memory in every single piece of art.
Date : 27th Jan to 1st Feb 2026
Timings: 10.30 AM to 7 PM
6 Days Exhibition / Entry Free
Arts, Crafts & Handlooms Exhibition
70+ Shopping Stalls | 50+ Craftsman & More
Entry Free!
Organized By
Grand Flea Market
For Details Contact
8073505441 / 9036658774
Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath,
(7 Gallaries and Lawn Area)
Venue: Kumara Krupa Road, Near Shivananda Circle
Bengaluru - 560 001.
HANDLOOMS | HOME DECOR | HANDICRAFTS | CLOTHING | JEWELLERS

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ISSN 0971 - 751X

After UNESCO's concerns on infra work at Hampi, govt. to submit report by Feb. 1

Hanuman temple on top of Anjanadri Hills near Anegundi at Gangavati Taluk in Koppal district of Karnataka, near Hampi. K. MURALI KUMAR

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Following concerns expressed by UNESCO about the proposed tourism infrastructural development at Anjanadri Hills, the Karnataka government is in the final stages of preparing a Heritage Impact Assessment Report, which is to be submitted by February 1, 2026.

The Anjanadri Hills falls in the buffer zone of Hampi, which has been recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The UNESCO had expressed concerns that proposed projects might affect the "Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property". The OUV is a key criterion for the UNESCO's World Heritage site designation.

Concerns raised

Following the 47th World Heritage Convention in July, the UNESCO had asked the State party to provide updates on the proposed township near the Anjanadri Hill, including the construction of 600 accommodations for pilgrims and other facilities and to submit the proposed projects details together with an Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) report to the World Heritage Centre, to be reviewed by the advisory bodies. The U.N. agency has also requested updates on the proposed ropeways and visitor facilities at Anjanadri Hill and clarifications on the status of the HIA.

The agency has also asked the State party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by February 1 an updated report on the state of conservation of the property.

Responding to the concerns raised by the World Heritage Committee, a senior official from the Tourism Department said that the guesthouse and toilet complexes are nearing completion, and the HIA have been conducted for the said facilities. "We got the HIA done for the guest house, and elevation modification in consonance with the landscape was suggested. That is already being done. Concerns with respect to pilgrim amenities such as the toilet block are also being factored in such a way that the OUV is not affected," the official said.

Month-end

The prepared reports were being compiled and would be sent to UNESCO by month-end, the official added.

On ropeway project

Given that the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the ropeway is still under way, the HIA for the same will be conducted later, they added. According to the official, no such new work would be taken up immediately.

A funicular system (cable rail) or a ropeway were being considered for transport earlier.

The group of monuments at Hampi was added in 'The List of World Heritage in Danger' in 1999 noting that the construction of two bridges threatened the integrity of the World Heritage Site. Following protective measures from the Karnataka government, Hampi was removed from the list in 2006.

Tiger cub captured

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

One more female tiger cub was captured at Nanjidevanapura in Chamarajanagar taluk's Biligiri Ranganathaswamy Temple Tiger Reserve by the Forest Department staff on Tuesday. The cub is in safe custody, said a statement.

UTTAR PRADESH MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)

Tender Notice

Tender Ref.No: UPMSCL/Drugs-245/22 Dated: 22nd January, 2026

e-TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF DRUGS

Online tenders are invited from licensed manufacturers for supply of drugs to UPMSCL. The details of tender, list of items and Tender Documents are made available on website https://etender.up.nic.in and www.upmsc.in. The last date/time of online submission of the tender documents is 12th February, 2026 upto 15:00 Hrs.

Managing Director
UPMSCL, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Uttar Pradesh

Office Chief Medical & Health Officer & Member Secretary Bharatpur

Sr. No. F()/NHM/2026/1200 Date : 15-01-2026

NIB : 01/2025-26 (NHM)

Online Bids for "Lab Regents & Consumable Item" are invited from interested bidders upto 2:00 PM dated 05.02.2026. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (**http://sppp.rajasthan.nic.in** & **https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**) of the state.

Estimated Cost Rs. 5 Crores.

NIB NO : MHS2526A4167
UBN No. : MHS2526GLRC05972

Chief Medical & Health Officer & Member Secretary DHS Bharatpur

DIPR/C/1090/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **SMT. SINDHU CHIDARAHALLI SRIKANTE GOWDA** aged 49 years Residing at Flat No. C-2402/03, Western Heights, Opposite Gurudwara, J P Road, Andheri West, Mumbai 400058 intend to purchase the Schedule Property from **SRI. G.N. KUMAR s/o. SRI. G.S. NAGARAJ** The seller became owner of the Schedule Property by virtue of getting BBMP Khata in his name And the Khata No. DA/W/160/KTR/346/2023-24 dated: 28/06/2023 reflecting the same. Any person/s, legal heirs, Trusts, Societies, Institutions, Academic Groups, Associations, Firms Companies, Corporate or any other claiming to have any charge lien, interest encumbrances, lease claim or demand of anyway of sale, transfer, memorandum of understanding, assignment, possession, succession, rights whatsoever the Schedule Property, may lodge their claim with the undersigned with original documentary proof within **15 days** from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, our clients will treat that there are no objections or claims in respect of the Schedule Property. No claims will be entertained thereafter and our clients will proceed with the sale transaction.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Vacant propertybearing No. 473-B, (Phase-1) BBMP Khata No. 645/473B/636/587, in Sector No. B, in the Ideal Homes Township, Formed by the Ideal Homes Co-operative Building Society Limited, Kenchenahalli / Halagevoderahalli Village, Kengeri Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, now coming under the limits of BBMP, Bangalore, measuring: East to West: 50+52/2 feet and North to South: 73+68/2 feet. Totally measuring 3595.50Square Feet and bounded on:-

East by : Site No. 473-A
West by : Site No. 472-A
North by : Site No. 473-C
South by : 15th A'Cross Road

Smt: MYTHRI I.E., Advocate
No.14, 4th Floor, No.409, HM Geneva House, Cunningham Road, Bengaluru 560052.
Contact No: 8880004403 /9900577088

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune
New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ce2wssd@gmail.com

E-Tender Notice No. 61 for FY 2025-26
Corrigendum

PMRDA invites Bids through e-tendering for Work of "Appointment of a Contractor for the Pawana river Pollution Abatement Project under the jurisdiction of the PMRDA region."

The Tender document can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in from 06/02/2026 at 17.00 PM Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26/02/2026 upto 17.00 PM Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
(Engineering Division-2)
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune
New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ce2wssd@gmail.com

E-Tender Notice No. 64 for FY 2025-26
Corrigendum

PMRDA invites Bids through e-tendering for Work of "Appointment of a Contractor for Sewerage arrangement of 3 Clusters and 7 Villages in Taluka Khed under the jurisdiction of the PMRDA region."

The Tender document can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in from 06/02/2026 at 17.00 PM Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26/02/2026 upto 17.00 PM Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
(Engineering Division-2)
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune
New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ce2wssd@gmail.com

E-Tender Notice No. 60 for FY 2025-26
Corrigendum

PMRDA invites Bids through e-tendering for Work of "Appointment of a Contractor for the Indrayani river Pollution Abatement Project under the jurisdiction of the PMRDA region."

The Tender document can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in from 06/02/2026 at 17.00 PM Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26/02/2026 upto 17.00 PM Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
(Engineering Division-2)
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 009

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

BWSSB invites Expression of Interest from Self Help Groups (SHGs) for the following works.

Name of EOI's	Address for Communication
EOI from SHG's under AMRUT 2.0 for 17 Nos of SHG's (10 Members per group) under EE(S-1) Division.	Office of the Executive Engineer, South-1, Water Supply & Sanitary Division, BWSSB, 4th Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru-560011. E-mail: ees@bwssb.gov.in

Pre-EOI Meeting: **31.01.2026 at 11:00 am.** Last date for receiving of Queries in portal: **31.01.2026 at 4:00 pm.** The Last date for submission of response to EOI: **03.02.2026 before 4:00 pm.** Date & time for opening of EOI: **04.02.2026 at 11:00 am.** EOI Validity period: **184** days from the date of award.

EOI from SHG's under AMRUT 2.0 for 22 Nos of SHG's (10 Members per group) under EE(SW-2) Division.	Office of the Executive Engineer, South-West-2 Division, 1st Floor, Shimsha Bhavan, Sangam Circle, Bengaluru-560078.

Pre-EOI Meeting: **04.02.2026 at 11:00 am.** Last date for receiving of Queries in portal: **04.02.2026 at 4:00 pm.** The Last date for submission of response to EOI: **07.02.2026 before 4:00 pm.** Date & time for opening of EOI: **09.02.2026 at 11:00 am.** EOI Validity period: **184** days from the date of award.

The details regarding the EOI & Participation process can be obtained by logging on to **www.bwssb.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above mentioned offices during working hours.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (South)

DIPR/CP/5220/CCL/2025-26

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune
New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ce2wssd@gmail.com

E-Tender Notice No. 62 for FY 2025-26
Corrigendum

PMRDA invites Bids through e-tendering for Work of "Appointment of a Contractor for Sewerage arrangement of 3 Clusters and 6 Villages in Taluka Mulshi under the jurisdiction of the PMRDA region."

The Tender document can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in from 06/02/2026 at 17.00 PM Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26/02/2026 upto 17.00 PM Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
(Engineering Division-2)
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune
New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ce2wssd@gmail.com

E-Tender Notice No. 65 for FY 2025-26
Corrigendum

PMRDA invites Bids through e-tendering for Work of "Appointment of a Contractor for Sewerage arrangement of 4 Clusters and 4 Villages in Taluka Shirur under the jurisdiction of the PMRDA region."

The Tender document can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in from 06/02/2026 at 17.00 PM Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26/02/2026 upto 17.00 PM Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
(Engineering Division-2)
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune
New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ce2wssd@gmail.com

E-Tender Notice No. 66 for FY 2025-26
Corrigendum

PMRDA invites Bids through e-tendering for Work of "Appointment of a Contractor for Sewerage arrangement of 1 Cluster and 2 Villages in taluka maval under the jurisdiction of the PMRDA region."

The Tender document can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in from 06/02/2026 at 17.00 PM Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26/02/2026 upto 17.00 PM Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
(Engineering Division-2)
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

BHUBANESWAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
AKASH SHOVA BUILDING, SACHIVALAYA MARG, BHUBANESWAR-751001
PABX No.0674-2392801/0998/6437, FAX No.0674-2390633/085; Visit us at: http://www.bda.gov.in/

Invitation For Bids - Bid Identification No.50/EM/BDA/2025-26 Date: 22/01/2026

Engineer Member, BDA on behalf of Bhubaneswar Development Authority, Bhubaneswar invites percentage rate bids in Double Cover System in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for civil works as mentioned below:

1.	Nature of works	: Civil & Electrical Work (Development of road work)
2.	Total No. of works	: 01 (one) No.
3.	Amount put to tender	: Rs.3.87 Crore
4.	Class of Contractor	: 'A' Class
5.	Period of Completion	: 9 (Nine) Calendar months
6.	Cost of Bid Documents	: Rs.10000.00 + 18% GST= Rs.11800.00 (Online transfer by the last date & time for receipt of bids)
7.	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	: 1% of estimated cost put to tender. (Online transfer by the last date & time for receipt of bids)
8.	Availability of Tender	: From 30.01.2026 to 5.30 PM of 16.02.2026 https://tendersodisha.gov.in.
9.	Date of opening of Tender	: Dt.17.02.2026 at 11.30 AM
10.	Place of opening of Tender	: O/o- Engineer Member, BDA, Bhubaneswar.

Further details can be seen from the website: **https://tendersodisha.gov.in.** Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

CAD-3099 :

Engineer Member, BDA, Bhubaneswar.

CHIKKABALLAPURA URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.
Sitrus City Meadows, 4th Sector, Tumakalahalli Village, B.B.Road, Chikkaballapur-562 101. Email ID:cuda.cbpur@gmail.com Telephone No:08156-274501.

ಸಂ:ಚಿ.ನ.ಅ.ಪ್ರಾ/Tender/03/2025–26/2348 Date:23.01.2026

Invitation for Tender

(For Lake Works –As per standard Bid Document KW 4 in two cover system.)

(1) The Commissioner, Chikkaballapur Urban Development Authority Invites Tenders from the eligible tenderers, for the construction of lake works detailed in the table below in Two cover document procedures as per KTPP rules 2000 shallbe followed. **(2)** Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka e-procurment website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in **(3)** Tenders must be electronically submitted in e-procurement portal. **(4)** Further information, if required, can be obtained from the office of the Commissioner, Chikkaballapur Urban Development Authority during working hours **(5)** Head of account: Lake development Cess. **(1)** Pre-bid meeting on **06.02.2026, 11:00 A.M. (2)** submission of queries **05.02.2026, 17.30. (3)** Last date & Time for receipt of tenders**: 23.02.2026, 17:30P.M. (4)** Date & Time for opening of Technical bid**: 25.02.2026, 11:00 A.M. (4)** Date & Time for opening of Financial bid: **02.03.2026, 11:00A.M. or later. Name of work: (1)** Development of Lake Bund, Entrance Arch and Toilets in Chitravathi Park by CUDA. (CKBUDA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT1). (Amount put to tender Rs.38409508.33) **(2)** Development of Parking Area, Approach Road, Food Court, Retaining Wall, Fencing for Park and Highmast Light etc. in Chitravathi Park In Chikkaballapur Urban Development Authority(CUDA) Limit. (CKBUDA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT2).(Amount put to tender Rs.40234461.56). In case of Any change in calendar of events, it will be published in e-procurement portal only. No separate paper notification will be given.

Sd/-
Commissioner,
Chikkaballapur Urban Development Authority
Chikkaballapur

DIPR/CHIKKABALLAPURA/R.O:390/KSMCA/2025-26

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
Yelahanka, BANGALORE - 560 064
Website: www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in

Tender Notice No. RWF/S/P1/016/2025-26 Dated 27.01.2026

On behalf of the President of India, the Principal Chief Materials Manager invites electronic Tenders from Interested Vendors for supply of the following items on the Indian Railways E-Portal **www.ireps.gov.in.**

Tender No.: P1252998A. **Short Description:** Fused silica Powder as per RWF specification (Developmental Tender). **Qty:** 1500 Kgs. **Date of Closing of Tenders:** 10.02.2026.

The above Tender details can be viewed on our website **www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in.**

Principal Chief Materials Manager

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU

Notice to the Respondent No. 14 to 16 Vide order dated: 09.01.2026

R.F.A. No. 1633/2022

Sri Meraj Ulla Huq..... Appellant
(By Sriyuths: G.R Anantharam & Others advs. for appellant)
V/S
Sri S Rajashekar & Ors.,..Respondents
(By Sriyuths: M. Siddaraju & S.B Halli Adv., for R1)

TO:
Respondents:

14. SMT. RATHNAMMA W/o Late Shantharaju
15. SRI C.S MALLANNA S/o Late Chennabasappa R-14 & R-15 Both Are R/at No.5, 3rd Block, 11th Cross, Thyagaraja Nagara, Bangalore-560 028.
16. SMT. MANGALAMMA W/o Shashidhar R/at No.6/58, 9th Cross, Adarsha Nagara, 3rd Main Road, Chamarajanagar, Bangalore.

Appeal from the Judgment & decree dated: **27.07.2022** passed in OS. **No.139/2015** on the file of the Senior Civil Judge & CJM, Chamarajanagar.

Notice is hereby given to you to appear in this court either in person or through Counsel duly instructed or through some one authorized by law, to act for you in the above appeal on 04.03.2026 in case you intend to contest the appeal. If you fail to appear, the same will be dealt with, heard & decided in your absence.

Issued under my hand & the seal of this court, this the 9th DAY OF JANUARY 2026

BY ORDER OF THE COURT
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

BEFORE THE HON'BLE 29th ADDITIONAL CHIEF JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE MAYO HALL, BANGALORE

Crl. Misc No. 50667/2025

Petitioner:
SYED SALAHUDDIN AGA,
aged 69 Years son of Aga
Flat No. 201, Vista Berlie Apartment
Berlie Street, Langford Town,
Shantinagar, Bengaluru-560025

- VERSUS -

Respondent:
BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE,
(A Statutory body constituted under the provisions of The Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act, 1977) with its office at "Corporation Offices", J.C. Road, Bangalore-560002.
Represented by its Commissioner.

PUBLIC NOTICE

WHEREAS the Petitioner has filed this petition under Section 13(3) of the Births and Deaths Act, 1969, the wife of the above named Petitioner namely Nahida Mujawar, W/o.Syed Salahuddin Aga who died on 27-02-2020 at Petitioner's house situated at Flat No.201, Vista Berlie Apartment, Berlie Street, Langford Town, Shantinagar, Bengaluru-560025. After the death, the Petitioner has not entered Death Certificate in the Office of the Respondent. Now the Petitioner is in need of said Death Certificate for the purpose of legal and for Documentation purposes, as such, as per the procedure, the Petitioner filed a Criminal Misc. No. 50667/2025 case before the Hon'ble 29th ACJM at Bengaluru and hearing date is on 03-03-2026
at 11.00 AM, anybody interested, please come and appear.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Court of this day of 22nd day of January 2026

By Order of the Hon'ble Court,
Sd/- Sheristedar
XXIX A C J M, Court,
Mayo hall, Bengaluru.

Address of Advocate:
Mr. ARJUN REGO, Advocate,
N-509, Manipal Centre,No.47/73,
Dickenson Road, Bangalore-560042
Mobile: 9845261368

Central Power Research Institute
Bangalore - 560 080
ADVERTISEMENT NO. CPRI/01/2026

CPRI invites applications for One (1) Project Engineer on purely temporary basis, initially for a period of one year. Interested candidates may refer website: http://cpri.res.in for details regarding eligibility criteria, educational qualification etc. and submit their application as per the prescribed format posted in website with all relevant copies of documents by post latest by 23-02-2026. Applications received after the due date will not be considered.

CBC 34104/12/0013/2526

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune
New Administrative Building, Near Akurdi Railway Station, Akurdi, Pune - 411044 Email: ce2wssd@gmail.com

E-Tender Notice No. 63 for FY 2025-26
Corrigendum

PMRDA invites Bids through e-tendering for Work of "Appointment of a Contractor for Sewerage arrangement of **5** Clusters and 8 Villages in Taluka Haveli under the jurisdiction of the PMRDA region."

The Tender document can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in from 06/02/2026 at 17.00 PM Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26/02/2026 upto 17.00 PM Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
(Engineering Division-2)
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, WIRELESS
No.1, M. G. Road, Bengaluru - 560001
Phone: +91-80-22864626, E-mail: spwireless@ksp.gov.in

NO: 08/MDN/STS/W/DIGITALUHF/BNG CCR/2025-26 Date: 27/01/2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through K.P.P Portal Only)

1. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0518, Date: 24/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Digital UHF Radio Communication Equipment for Bengaluru city through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs.485.66 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **23/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**
2. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0519, Date: 24/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Supply and Maintenance of Digital VHF Radio Communication Equipment for Wireless Central Zone and Southern Zone through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs.488.90 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **23/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**
3. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0520, Date: 24/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Digital UHFVHF Radio Communication Equipment for DGP Control Room and State Intelligence through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs. 215.74 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **23/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**
4. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0521, Date: 24/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Design, Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Digital VHF Radio Communication Network for Internal Security Division through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs.329.36 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **23/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**
5. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0522, Date: 25/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Digital VHF Radio Communication Equipment for KSRP and IRB Battalion through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs.444.99 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **24/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**
6. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0523, Date: 25/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Digital VHF/UHF Radio Communication Equipment form Mysuru, Hubli-Dharwad and Mangaluru city through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs.324.28 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **24/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**
7. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0524, Date: 25/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Supply and Maintenance of Digital VHF/UHF Radio Communication Equipment for Northern Range and Wireless HQ through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs.439.49 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **24/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**
8. Tender No: **KSP/2025-26/IND0525, Date: 25/01/2026**
   Name of Work: Additional Director General of Police, Communication, Logistics & Modernization, Bengaluru has invited a tender for Supply and Maintenance of Digital VHF Radio Communication Equipment for Various District through e-procurement portal. Estimated Bid value **Rs.485.26 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **04/02/2026 at 11.30 Hrs.** The Last date and time for tender submission is **24/02/2026, at 17.00 Hrs.**

Further details can be obtained by visiting e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For more information, please contact the above office.

Sd/- Superintendent of Police, Wireless, Bengaluru.

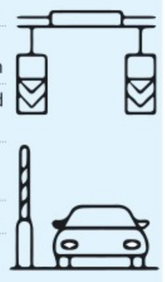
DIPR/CP/5230/SPAN COM/2025-26

From Page One

Zoom past toll plazas

What is MLFF (Multi-Lane Free Flow)?

- **Type:** Barrier-less electronic tolling system
- **How it works:** Uses FASTag (RFID) and ANPR cameras to identify vehicles in motion
- **Infrastructure:** Overhead gantries instead of toll booths
- **Speed:** Toll charged without vehicles stopping
- **Key purpose:** Remove queues at toll plazas
- **Benefits:** Saves time and fuel, reduces congestion and emissions



Speaking to *The Hindu*, NHAI's Regional Officer (Karnataka) Vilas P. Brahmankar said the project marks a significant step towards seamless electronic tolling. "This is a major shift towards barrier-less toll collection. MLFF enables transactions through the reading of FASTag and Vehicle Registration Numbersusing high-performance RFID readers and ANPR cameras. Vehicles will no longer need to stop at toll plazas," he said. India rolled out its first MLFF tolling system in August 2025 at the Choryasi Fee Plaza on NH-48 in Gujarat. The barrier-free setup allows toll deduction while vehicles are in motion, and will help cut congestion and improve overall traffic flow. Another senior NHAI official told *The Hindu* that the Bengaluru-Mysuru project would initially function as a pilot, with existing toll plazas remaining in place for the time being.

"This is a testing phase. While MLFF gantries and systems will be installed, toll plazas will not be immediately removed. The pilot will allow us to study system accuracy, user compliance, enforcement challenges and backend settlement processes. Based on its performance, we will move towards full-scale implementation and eventually phase out physical toll booths."

"This MLFF system will be installed before of the existing toll plazas, allowing the toll amount to be automatically deducted from FASTag accounts without vehicles having to pass through the toll booths. The system has demonstrated 99% efficiency and it is virtually error-free," the official said. Once fully operational, the MLFF system would make tolling almost invisible to road users, ensuring smoother traffic flow on one of the busiest highway corridors connecting Mysuru with the State's capital city. Under the contract, the company implementing the system is also responsible for its operation and maintenance. The firm must ensure that toll amounts collected are transferred to the linked bank accounts.

Techie booked for stealing source code worth ₹87 crore from IT company

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The accused unauthorisedly accessed and exfiltrated confidential source code and sensitive software data

A senior employee of an IT company has been booked for allegedly stealing the company's proprietary software source code valued at €8 million (approximately ₹87 crore).

According to the police, the accused, who worked as a Senior Manager - Research Scientist, unauthorisedly accessed and exfiltrated confidential source code and sensitive software data on October 11, 2025. The data was allegedly transferred to his personal email account without the company's consent. The police said the accused was employed with the company from February 1, 2020. During an internal audit, company officials detected suspicious data transfers and confronted the employee. "The accused admitted to the unauthorised transfer of source code during the internal inquiry, and the admission was video recorded by the company," a police officer said. Following the inquiry, the company terminated his services on December 3, 2025. The complainant stated that the alleged data theft caused severe business impact and compromised the company's intellectual property rights.

Based on the complaint alleging cheating by deception and cyber offences, police have registered a case under Sections 65, 66, 66(C), and 66(D) of the Information Technology Act, 2000. Further investigation is under way.

Couple flees with gold, diamonds worth ₹18 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A couple working as domestic help allegedly decamped with gold, diamond jewellery, silver articles, and cash worth nearly ₹18 crore from the residence of a Bengaluru-based builder in Marathahalli. The accused, identified as Dinesh and Kamala, were employed as domestic workers at the builder's house.

According to the police, the couple allegedly fled with around 11.5 kg of gold and diamond jewellery, 5 kg of silver articles and ₹11.5 lakh in cash.

The theft reportedly took place on Sunday, when the builder's family had stepped out to attend a function.

When the family returned, they found the valuables and the couple missing. Preliminary investigation suggests that the accused may have fled to Nepal. A case has been registered at the Marathahalli police station, and a special investigation team has been formed to trace the accused and recover the stolen property.

The police are examining CCTV footage and travel records as part of the probe.

Police register case after woman alleges harassment by 'naked' man in car

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after a video went viral on social media in which a woman in Bengaluru alleged that a 'completely naked' man in a car sexually harassed her, the Hebbagodi police registered a *suo motu* case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

In the video shared on her Instagram handle, the woman claimed that she was returning home from work when a man sitting completely disrobed inside a car repeatedly called out to her, and allegedly drove the vehicle towards her in a threatening manner. She is heard shouting for help in the video and accusing passersby of ignoring her distress. She further alleged that some people merely smiled and walked away, assuming that the incident was part of a social media reel.

Head Constable Rushabhendra, attached to Hebbagodi Police Station, filed a complaint after coming across the video while monitoring social media platforms. In his complaint, he stated that the video clearly showed the woman accusing a man in a car of sexually harassing her while being in a disrobed state.

Based on the complaint, on January 25, the police registered a case of sexual harassment under the BNS. Efforts are under way to trace the accused using CCTV camera footage from the area where the incident allegedly occurred. The police are also trying to locate the woman to record her statement.

Woman injured as minor riding bike knocks her down

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

An elderly woman pedestrian was grievously injured after two minors riding a scooter knocked her down in Nandini Layout on Monday afternoon. The entire incident was captured on a CCTV camera.

The accident occurred when the woman was walking along the roadside. The scooter knocked her down, causing her to fall. She suffered severe head injuries. Passers-by rushed her to a nearby private hospital. The two minor riders attempted to flee from the spot, but were caught by locals and handed over to the Nandini Layout police.

The police are awaiting recovery of the victim to record her statement.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that our client **Mr.Gopi Kandeepan S/o Mr.Kandeepan** is intending to purchase the schedule property from **Mrs.Chaitra W/o Mr.Somesh** ; person/s objecting for the proposed purchase or are having any right, title, interest or any type of claim over the scheduled property is hereby called upon to file their objections/claims what so ever along with documentary proof on or before **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice with the under mentioned advocate failing which; our clients shall proceed and complete the sale transaction with the above stated person.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Residential Property bearing **Sy. No.42/1,** Katha No.949, Situated at **Yerrappanahalli Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore,** Measuring East to West **40 Feet** and North to South **62 Feet,** in all measuring **2480 Square Feet,** together with all appurtenances whatsoever whether underneath or above the surface and bounded on the:

East by : Nagarathamma's House, West by : Property belongs to Saravana and Lokanathan, North by : Road, South by : Saraswathamma's Property.

C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43
M : 9845846428, 9108784843
E- Mail: rvlaw.76@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the general public that, my client **Sri. Jaswinder Singh,** aged about 58 years, S/o. Sri. Gurubax Singh, residing at Flat No.A104, Salarpuria Melody Apartment, Pantharapalya, Bangalore 560039 has lost a Registered original Sale Deed vide **Document No.BMH-1-01905-2014-15, Book 4, CD No.BMHD677, dt:12-06-2014** registered in the office of Sub-Registrar, Bommanahalli, Bangalore in favour of Mrs. Ashu Chhabra and Mr. Ashok Kumar Chhabra, in respect of a **3 BHK Apartment Unit bearing No.A-104,** presently the BBMP Ward No.160 assigned Flat With **Khatha No. 518/31/63/26/20/226/A-104/1F,** in **1st Floor of Wing known as "A"** in the Building known as **"MELODY"** (a Project jointly promoted by Salarpuria and Sattva Group) constructed in the Schedule 'A' Property with a **super built-up area of 1804 Sq. ft.,** which is inclusive of proportionate share in common areas such as passages, lobbies, lifts, staircases and other areas of common use, along with exclusive right to use 660 Sq. ft., of Terrace Area and **one covered car park in the Building** together with an **undivided 0.384%** share in the land comprised in the Schedule 'A' Property which has been amalgamated by Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike is allotted khatha No.29/26/26/226 and total area of amalgamated Schedule 'A' property is 143000 Sq. ft. and in this regards has lodged a Police Complaint to the Karnataka State Police (U/s 155 Cr.PC) Lost **Article Report Serial No.2027404 Police Unit : Bangalore City, Lost Article Report No.2027404/2026, dt:26-01-2026.** Hence, if anybody finds the said Documents please inform/return to the below address **within 7 days.**

Srinivasa S.A., Advocate
No.79/B, 7th Main, 50 feet Road,
BSK 1st Stage, Bangalore-560 050.
Mob: 9008003449
E-mail : srinilegals@gmail.com
Place : Bangalore Date : 27-01-2026

THE HINDU IN SCHOOL PRESENTS SCHOOL BUZZ
A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

IMPRESSIVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

SFS Academy reported notable achievements at the Nova '25 Inter-School Competition at Alliance University, where students competed alongside participants from more than 85 institutions nationwide. In the Quiz Competition, Pramit Sahu and Karthik G secured second place, while Sukhin and Alden won third place. The Fusion Dance Team also earned third prize for their synchronised performance. Additionally, six teams showcased Science and Robotics projects, drawing appreciation for their innovation, technical skill, and problem-solving abilities.

STUDENTS SHINE IN NATIONAL IDEATHON

The Samhita Academy reported strong participation in the Youth Ideathon 2025, organised by ThinkStartup in association with CBSE and IIT Delhi. Focusing on innovation, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and design thinking, the event drew over 100,000 students nationwide. After multiple screening stages, including expert video pitch evaluations, 11 TSA teams entered the Top 2000, with two progressing to the Top 125. In the final round at IIT Delhi, the TSA team TEKADEMY emerged as a national topper, receiving a Rs.45,000 development grant. The teacher-mentor earned the Teacher of Innovation Award (Bronze), and the Principal received the Institutional Leadership in Entrepreneurship Award.

SPORTS DAY CELEBRATED

Vishwa Venkateshwara International School celebrated their Sports Day with great enthusiasm, beginning with a vibrant fitness showcase that set an energetic tone. Students took part in a range of athletic events, demonstrating strong sportsmanship, teamwork, and determination. Winners were recognised during the prize distribution ceremony. Sri Katta Balaji, Founder and Chairman of VV Group of Institutions, declared the Sports Meet open and encouraged students to pursue excellence in sports and life. The ceremony concluded formally under the guidance of the Principal, Mrs. Rajeshwari, and ended with the singing of the National Anthem.

For Subscription related queries, please contact Raghavendra Desai:
Handphone:+91 9986196254 | Email: desai.rnb@thehindu.co.in

CIO
बीमा लोकपाल परिषद
Council for Insurance Ombudsmen

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL FOR INSURANCE OMBUDSMEN
3RD FLOOR JEEVAN SEVA ANNEXE, SANTACRUZ WEST, MUMBAI 400054

Advt.No.3/2025-2026 **Date:28.01.2026**

CONTRACTUAL ENGAGEMENT OF PERSONNEL HAVING EXPERIENCE IN GENERAL INSURANCE (including health Insurance)/ Independent Indian Insurance TPAs/ LIFE INSURANCE INDUSTRY AS SPECIALISTS

The Council for Insurance Ombudsmen proposes to invite online applications to engage retired/ voluntarily retired/ resigned personnel having experience of working in Life insurance/ General insurance (including Health insurance) companies (both public and private sector) or Offices of Independent Indian Insurance TPAs on contractual basis as Specialists at the following Offices of the Insurance Ombudsman :

Ahmedabad	Bengaluru	Bhopal	Bhubaneswar
Chandigarh	Chennai	Delhi	Kochi
Guwahati	Hyderabad	Jaipur	Kolkata
Lucknow	Mumbai	Noida	Patna
Pune	Thane		

Eligibility:

(i) Minimum age – Not less than 40 years and maximum age - not more than 62 years (as on the last date for online submission of application).

(ii) Minimum 10 years' experience in an Insurance company in India in Public/Private sector or in Independent Indian Insurance TPA as an officer whose last assignment was in scale equivalent to Scale II, III or IV in the Public Sector insurance companies.

Last date for submission of online application form is 18.02.2026 upto 17:30 hrs

For details regarding online application form, eligibility, terms of the contractual engagement, application procedure and other instructions, kindly scan QR code or visit our website **www.cioins.co.in.** (under tab "Engagement of Specialist")

Note: Addendum / further communications in this regard, if any, will be notified in the website only.

Secretary General (CIO)

CBC 15227/12/0003/2526

MINISTRY OF MICRO, SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COIR BOARD

VACANCY NOTIFICATION

Coir Board, a statutory body under the Ministry of MSME, Government of India invites applications from officers under Central/ State Government/ Union Territory Administration/ Statutory Body/ Autonomous Body to fill up the vacant post of Director (RDTE) on Deputation including Short Term Contract (ISTC)

Name of Post	Pay level (7th CPC)	No. of vacancy	Place of Posting
Director (Research, Development, Training &Extension)	Level 12	1	Central Coir Research Institute, Coir Board, Kalavoor, Alappuzha, Kerala

Applicants may visit Coir Board Website (www.coirboard.gov.in) for the detailed advertisement including eligibility, qualification etc. Applications in complete in all respect should reach (through proper channel) The Secretary, Coir Board, Coir House, MG Road, Kochi, Ernakulam – 682016 in hardcopy within 45 (Forty Five) days from the date of issue of this advertisement in 'Employment News'.

Scan QR code for Coir Board website

CBC 25131/12/0035/2526

13.01.2026 **S/d SECRETARY, COIR BOARD**

GP offices in Karnataka to be named after Mahatma Gandhi

Congress protests against Union government introducing the VB-G RAMG Act by repealing the MGNREGA; Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakuamr court arrest

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiahtying a 'gamcha' onto the head of Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar during a protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Tuesday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The Congress government has decided to name all 6,000 gram panchayat offices in the State after Mahatma Gandhi. This was announced by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar during the the party's protest against the Union government introducing the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G Ram G) Act by repealing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Mr. Siddaramaiah, Mr. Shivakumar, Congress general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, along with party legislators and MPs, were later taken into preventive custody when they decided to march towards Lok Bhavan, as part of the Lok Bhavan Chalo protest, to submit a memorandum to the Governor demanding repeal of the new Act.

Maintaining status quo

Speaking at the protest earlier at Freedom Park, Mr. Siddaramaiah said the decision of the Union government is testimony to the antipathy of the BJP and its affiliates to the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and the spirit of decentralisation enshrined in the earlier Act named after him. The new Act, which bears the name "Ram", has no regard for the ideals of "Dasharatha's son Ram" or "Sita's husband Ram", he argued. "At the behest of RSS, the BJP-led Central government is rolling back all pro-poor policies," he said, alleging that the belief system of the RSS and the BJP was that "the poor should remain subservient forever."

"Around five crore people, including the differently-abled, were getting employment in the rural areas. The Centre now wants to decide what work should be done, whereas earlier it was done by panchayats," Mr. Siddaramaiah alleged, adding that the role of panchayats had been severely curtailed.

Assault on the poor

Mr. Surjewala, who is Karnataka in charge, alleged that the Centre would eventually scrap the rural employment guarantee scheme. "This is an assault on the rights of crores of poor, deprived and needy, particularly SC, ST and OBCs, who constitute 85% of MGNREGA workers," he said.

Later in the day, the Congress workers met Govenor Thaawarchand Gehlot and submitted a petition seeking rolling back the new law and reintroduction of the old one.

Senior Congress leader V.S. Ugrappa had last week called on the State government to name gram panchayats after Mahatma Gandhi.

Several Ministers skip session to take part in Cong. protest

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Several Ministers skipped the Legislative Assembly session on Tuesday despite a decision taken at the Business Advisory Committee meeting last week directing Ministers to be present in the House during Question Hour.

Speaker U.T. Khader read out the names of the Ministers who were absent from the House.

Besides Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, the Ministers who abstained were K.H. Muniyappa, K.J. George, Dinesh Gundu Rao, H.C. Mahadevappa, Priyank Kharge, B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan, M.C. Sudhakar, Sharan Prakash Patil, Laxmi Hebbalkar, and Eshwar Khandre.

They were away participating in a Congress protest seeking the restoration of MGNREGA.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda answered all questions directed to Mr. Shivakumar, while Home Minister G. Parameshwara responded to questions related to his department.

BJP-JD(S) legislators stage protest seeking resignation of Excise Minister

BJP and JD(S) leaders staging a protest in Bengaluru on Tuesday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The BJP and the JD(S) legislators staged a dharna in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the Vidhana Soudha premises in Bengaluru on Tuesday seeking the resignation of Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur over alleged corruption and action against Congress legislators who allegedly misbehaved with the Governor during the joint session of the legislature.

The Opposition leaders declared that they would continue to fight till the Minister resigns.

"The excise vendors' association has estimated the corruption to be around ₹6,000 crore, and has decided to petition Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in this regard. We want to caution Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that if he fails to sack the Minister, we may have to come to the conclusion that the Chief Minister himself is behind this corruption. Such a doubt has arisen as the supporters of the Excise Minister are saying that the Minister was allowed to handle only three districts," said Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok.

Addressing the protesters, Mr. Ashok termed the Congress government in Karnataka as a 'goonda dispensation', which he claimed was proved by the behaviour of Congress legislators during the address of the Governor to the joint session of the legislature.

While seeking action against those who allegedly misbehaved with the Governor during the joint session, he also demanded that action be taken against Congress MLA Nara Bharat Reddy, whose supporters allegedly attacked BJP MLA G. Janardhana Reddy's residence in Ballari. BJP State unit President B.Y. Vijayendra demanded that the legislators who allegedly misbehaved with the Governor be suspended from the Houses.

Leader of Opposition in Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy warned that the BJP-JD(S) combine would expose the alleged misdeeds of Congress MLC B.K. Hariprasad, while accusing him of misbehaving with the Governor.

JD(S) legislature party leader in the Assembly C. B. Suresh Babu remarked that people of Karnataka would teach a befitting lesson to the Congress government for 'misgovernance'.

Speaker asks MLAs not to go into Governor's conduct during debate

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

U.T. Khader

Amid the political heat over Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot not reading the entire text of the prepared speech during his address to the joint session of the legislature, Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader on Tuesday came out with a ruling, asking members not to go into the conduct of the Governor while debating on the motion of thanks to the Governor's address.

The issue figured when Congress member A.S. Ponnanna, during the debate on motion of thanks to the Governor's address, argued that it was mandatory for the Governor to address the joint session as per the Constitutional provisions. Recalling that the Governor of West Bengal had once skipped two paragraphs of the speech, he said the issue had come up for debate in the Lok Sabha.

Taking exception to Mr. Ponnanna referring to this, BJP member S. Suresh Kumar argued that the norms related to the legislature proceedings barred members from referring to the conduct of the Governor or even taking his name during the debate on motion of thanks. Along with Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok, he appealed to the Speaker to come out with a ruling in this regard.

Responding to this, the Speaker asked the members not to go into the conduct of the Governor during the debate and instead focus on the contents of his speech.

Defending Mr. Ponnanna, Home Minister G. Parameshwara said he (Ponnanna) was only referring to the "stated Constitutional position" and not made any remarks on the Governor's conduct.

Meanwhile, the BJP members' criticism that the Congress government lacks "wisdom and discretion" irritated Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. He shot back at them by stating, "the government has both wisdom and discretion. But the Opposition too should have wisdom and discretion... What moral right and honesty do you have after removing the name of Mahatma Gandhi from the job scheme?"

Speaker refers Suresh Kumar plaint to Privileges Committee

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Legislative Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader on Tuesday referred to the House Privileges Committee a complaint registered at the Vidhana Soudha police station and the incident involving posters being pasted on the compound wall of the residence of former Minister and BJP MLA S. Suresh Kumar.

Raising the issue in the Assembly, Mr. Kumar said he was unable to discharge his duties as a legislator owing to the incident. He also wrote to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah seeking action in the matter. A group of Congress workers had staged a protest by pasting posters on the compound wall of Mr. Kumar's residence in Rajajinagar on Saturday. The Basaweshwaranagar police later arrested four persons in connection with the incident.

The protesters alleged that Mr. Kumar had made derogatory remarks against Urban Development and Town Planning Minister Byrathi Suresh during the Assembly proceedings on Friday.

Mr. Kumar later expressed regret over the remarks in the House, stating that it had already been expunged from the records. "It is a closed chapter," he said.

On Friday, he also spoke to Mr. Byrathi Suresh and RDPR Minister Priyank Kharge, while Mr. Siddaramaiah intervened and suggested that the remarks be expunged.

A complaint seeking action against Mr. Kumar was registered at the Vidhana Soudha police station on Sunday. The BJP member sought action against those responsible for the protest. The Speaker subsequently referred the matter to the Privileges Committee of the House.

Protest over 'corruption' in Excise Dept. consumes Council proceedings

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Opposition's demand for the sacking of Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur over the alleged corruption and disagreement between the government and the Opposition over the discussion on the Governor's address claimed the afternoon session of the Legislative Council on Tuesday.

While Chairman Basavaraj Horatti allowed a discussion on the alleged corruption in the Excise Department, which Leader of Opposition Chalavadi Narayanaswamy put the figure at ₹4,000 crore, the BJP was firm on its demand for the Minister's sacking. Mr. Narayanaswamy further said that Wine Merchants Association president Guruswamy had publicly stated that corruption was to the tune of ₹6,000 crore. He cited statements of a complainant before the Lokayukta to justify his allegations, and pointed out that a bribe of ₹80 lakh was being sought for a CL-7 licence while it was ₹1.5 crore for a microbrewery.

Another BJP member N. Ravikumar demanded an investigation into the allegation by a sitting judge.

When the House resumed post lunch, Mr. Horatti allowed the discussion on the Governor's speech, which was opposed by the BJP members, who raised slogans in the House, interrupting Congress member Ivan D'Souza.

The House's discussion saw a diversion when the BJP questioned the morality of the government to have a discussion on the Governor's address when it had criticised Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot after he made a brief address to the joint legislature session before walking out.

Intervention by Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil to pacify the BJP and Janata Dal (Secular) members to allow the discussion on Governor's address did not yield results, and Mr. Thimmapur's attempt to respond to the allegations was stalled by Mr. Horatti.

While Mr. Patil said that the discussion on the alleged corruption in Excise department could be taken up after the discussion and Mr. Thimmapur would respond, the Opposition refused to budge.

The arguments between the treasury and opposition benches lasted for over an hour. While the House was adjourned once, the House could not be brought to order eventually forcing Deputy Chairman M.K. Pranesh, who was in the Chair, to adjourn the House for Wednesday.

Govt. to set up panel to help bring tech-related works under LADS

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Statistics and Planning Minister D. Sudhakar on Tuesday announced that the government would constitute a committee to look into the issue of including works related to technological innovations into the MLAs' Local Area Development Scheme (LADS).

He made the statement while replying to a call attention notice tabled by Congress member Prakash K. Koliwad who expressed concern over the Local Area Development scheme, under which the MLAs have discretionary powers to use development grants, not having provisions to take up works related to digital and technological innovations.

He said his initiative to set up a digital library under this scheme to help those preparing for competitive examinations in his constituency had hit a stumbling block as there was no precedence in this regard. "The officials concerned go by the Scheduled Rates (SR) while preparing the cost estimates of the proposed work. While other routine works like building a road or drain have a SRs, no such official evaluation of costs is available for technology related works," he said and urged the government to make provisions for including tech-related works under this scheme.

Responding to this, the Minister said the panel would examine all the aspects.

Big leaders from all parties involved in illegal sand mining in Raichur, says Home Minister

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Home Minister G. Parameshwara told the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday that several big leaders from all political parties are involved in illegal sand extraction in rivers in Raichur district and said he would convene a meeting of legislators to address the issue.

G. Parameshwara

Replying to a question by JD(S) member Karemma Naik during Question Hour, Dr. Parameshwara described the situation as "a little embarrassing" and admitted that many influential leaders were involved in the illegal extraction of sand from the Krishna and the Tungabhadra in the district.

He said that 31 individuals have been externed/banished from Raichur district over the last three years for their alleged involvement in illegal sand extraction and other unlawful activities. In the Devadurga Assembly constituency alone, 440 cases related to illegal extraction and 550 cases of gambling have been registered.

The Home Minister said police action against illegal sand extraction is initiated based on complaints received from a committee comprising officials from the Mines and Geology Department, the Deputy Commissioner, and the tahsildar.

Earlier, Ms. Karemma alleged that her life was under threat, claiming that gangs involved in illegal sand extraction had staged protests outside her residence and followed her vehicle. She also accused the police of supporting these gang members and encouraging illegal extraction activities.

Ms. Karemma said that although the Mines and Geology Department had invited tenders for sand extraction, the tenders were not opened. She added that illegal extraction had damaged roads and caused dust to settle on cotton and other crops, leaving her unable to respond to constant public complaints.

INBRIEF

13 integrated laboratories to be ready by April in A.P.

Thirteen Integrated Public Health Laboratories being set up at Area Hospitals across Andhra Pradesh will help improve healthcare services in rural areas, Minister for Health, Medical Education and Family Welfare Satya Kumar Yadav said, adding that the facilities are likely to start functioning from March or April. The labs are being set up under the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission at a cost of ₹16.25 crore.

Deepak death case: court denies bail to accused

The Kunnamangalam Judicial First Class Magistrate's Court in Kozhikode, Kerala on Tuesday dismissed the bail plea of Shimjitha Musthafa, who has been charged with abetment of the suicide of salesman U. Deepak, whom she had accused of sexual misconduct on a moving bus, earlier this month. Magistrate M. Athira agreed with the prosecution that releasing the accused could lead to evidence tampering and influence over witnesses. *(Suicide Prevention Helpline: Disha - 1056, 0471-2552056)*

Boat mishap: Toll rises to 3

A woman who was in critical condition succumbed on Tuesday, raising the death toll of the Udupi boat tragedy to three. Disha, 23, had been on a ventilator since Monday and passed away on Tuesday, police said.. Two Mysuru call centre employees had died after their boat capsized near the Hangarkatte estuary on Monday. The police registered a case against the owner and the captain of the boat.

No shortage of water for drinking or crops in Jamkhandi, says State govt.

Siddu Savadi says over 500 villages depend on the Hipparagi barrage and the washing away of the gate and the consequent loss of water have caused damage to crops on nearly three lakh acres

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government told the Legislative Assembly here on Tuesday that there will be no shortage of water for drinking purpose or crops in Jamkhandi, Bagalkot district, even though the 22nd gate of the Hipparagi barrage has washed away.

Replying during Question Hour to BJP member Siddu Savadi, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, answering on behalf of Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, said that about 2.5 tmcft of water has flowed out after the

Krishna Byre Gowda

gate was washed away.

However, the barrage has been receiving a daily inflow of around 550 cusecs, and the current water storage stands at 3.9 tmcft against its maximum capacity of 6 tmcft. Mr. Byre Gowda said that tenders have been called for replacing the temporary gate that has been installed.

He added that the Central Technical Evaluation Committee must assess the proposal to replace all the gates of the barrage, a project estimated to cost about ₹40 crore.

Eight constituencies

The barrage supplies water for irrigation and drinking purposes to residents across eight Assembly constituencies. Both BJP and Congress members urged the State government to write to the Maharashtra government seeking the release of 2 tmcft of water from the Koyna dam to meet drinking water needs in Jamkhandi and also, towns in Belagavi district.

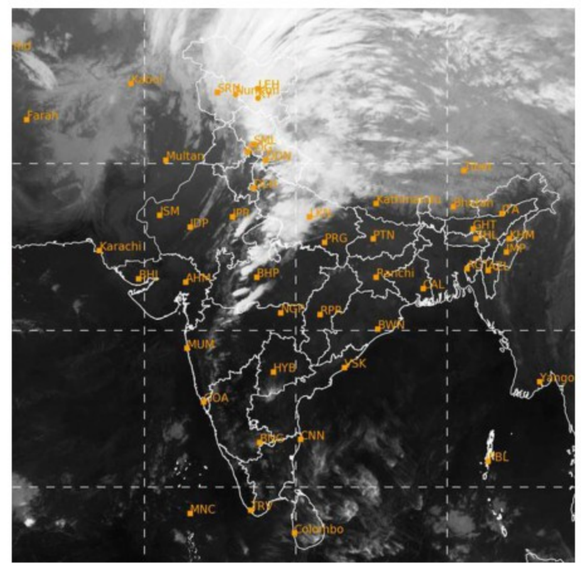
Mr. Siddu Savadi said that over 500 villages depend on the Hipparagi barrage for drinking water. He said that the washing away of the gate and the consequent loss of water have caused damage to crops on nearly three lakh acres.

Laxman Savadi (Congress) demanded that the Speaker allot time for a detailed discussion on the issue when Mr. Shivakumar, who also holds the Water Resources portfolio, is present in the House.

Mr. Shivakumar was absent from the House on Tuesday as he was participating in a Congress protest in the city against the new job scheme of the Centre.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.45 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Cold wave conditions likely at isolated places over Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh and Delhi. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	28.7	11.7	Kozhikode	—	32.2	26.2
Ahmedabad	—	28.6	17.2	Kurnool	—	32.5	20.0
Aizawl	—	28.5	8.5	Lucknow	—	24.5	11.2
Allahabad	—	27.0	12.6	Madurai	—	33.0	21.5
Bengaluru	—	29.4	16.6	Mangaluru	—	33.1	24.0
Bhopal	—	28.0	14.0	Mumbai	—	27.8	22.6
Bhubaneswar	—	31.7	14.6	Mysuru	—	30.4	17.4
Chandigarh	—	15.5	10.1	New Delhi	—	16.9	8.0
Chennai	—	30.1	22.1	Patna	—	23.9	13.7
Coimbatore	1	30.4	19.8	Port Blair	—	30.6	23.2
Dehradun	—	22.6	10.5	Puducherry	—	28.2	22.6
Gangtok	—	17.0	7.6	Pune	—	32.5	20.1
Goa	—	32.6	22.8	Raipur	—	31.0	15.9
Guwahati	—	27.5	13.0	Ranchi	—	25.9	11.0
Hubballi	—	29.0	19.0	Shillong	—	19.8	7.6
Hyderabad	—	30.2	19.0	Shimla	—	11.0	7.4
Imphal	—	25.4	7.5	Srinagar	—	2.2	-0.1
Jaipur	0.4	21.9	13.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.2	23.9
Kochi	—	32.4	25.2	Tiruchi	0.1	30.4	22.0
Kohima	—	17.5	7.0	Vijayawada	—	30.2	20.3
Kolkata	—	27.0	15.8	Visakhapatnam	—	29.1	20.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.87	..74	38	... 134	...153	
Bengaluru	...5	..—	38	 71	...101	
Chennai	...4	6	54	 88	81	
Delhi	.13	244	97	... 421	...380	
Hyderabad	...8	..36	28	... 101	...111	
Kolkata	...6	..88	51	... 160	...141	
Lucknow	.19	..41	38	... 208	...136	
Mumbai	...1	..62	..3	... 131	...107	
Pune	..—	..58	31	... 190	...147	
Visakhapatnam	.22	..86	21	... 185	...196	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 376 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Davanagere, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Telangana municipal elections on Feb. 11

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Elections to seven Municipal Corporations and 116 Municipalties in Telangana will be held in a single phase on February 11, the State Election Commission (SEC) announced on Tuesday.

According to the schedule issued by the SEC, notification for the polls will be issued on Wednesday and filing of nominations will commence immediately. The last date for filing nominations is January 30 and their scrutiny will be taken up the next day (January 31).

A total of 2,582 wards spread over 116 municipalities and 414 wards of the seven municipal corporations spread over 32 districts will go to the polls in the State with 52.43 lakh voters.

Cong. asks for larger seat share in UDF

The Hindu Bureau
KOTTAYAM

As seat-sharing talks gather momentum within the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Congress-led alliance appears headed for a tense phase of negotiations with the P.J. Joseph-led Kerala Congress, particularly over constituencies in Central Travancore – a region that has increasingly become the coalition's most delicate political balancing act.

Congress leaders from the region have already begun positioning themselves for tickets in Changanassery and Ettumanur, both currently held by the Left Democratic Front.

The Congress leadership believes the political ground has shifted in its favour, citing what it views as increased goodwill from the Catholic Church.

HC refuses bail to Vinay Kulkarni, tells him to move SC

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Rejecting a plea for grant of bail made by Congress MLA from Dharwad constituency Vinay R. Kulkarni, the High Court of Karnataka on Tuesday asked him to approach the Supreme Court as the latter cancelled his bail on the ground of "attempting to either contact or influence witnesses" in a 2016 case of murder of a BJP leader.

Justice S. Sunil Dutt Yadav, in his order dismissing Mr. Kulkarni's petition, has said that "it will be against judicial propriety for any other court to reconsider and grant bail to the petitioner as the Supreme Court has cancelled bail on the ground of violation of conditions without reserving liberty" to seek bail afresh.

Mr. Kulkarni filed the petition seeking bail after the trial court declined to grant him bail citing the Supreme Court's June 2025 order cancelling his bail.

He sought bail while pointing out that there has been "a change in circumstances" now as all the important witnesses have been examined and their statements have been recorded by the trial court and it is only the evidence of official witnesses that remains to be recorded.

It was also pointed out that Mr. Kulkarni enjoyed relief of bail for four years as the Supreme Court itself granted bail to him in August 2021 before cancelling it in June 2025 on the ground of him making an attempt to tamper with evidence.

Maiden visit

Unusual migration: Greater flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) are sighted on Hope Island in Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary in the Kakinada Bay of Andhra Pradesh for the first time this season on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Meet with National Highways officials to discuss special FASTags for legislators

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Speaker U.T. Khader has decided to convene a meeting of National Highways and PWD officials to examine the proposal of providing special FASTags to legislators to ensure easy access to toll roads.

The Speaker made this announcement following suggestion from Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar that special FASTags should be provided to legislators and MPs to help prevent any confusion over identity while entering the toll roads.

The issue was raised by

Speaker U.T. Khader made the announcement after a suggestion from Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar

Congress member S.N. Subba Reddy, who tabled a call attention notice, alleging that legislators are facing hardships and embarrassing moments at the toll booths to prove their identity though they have been given free access to use such roads.

His views were endorsed by members cutting across party lines. Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok expressed concern that though a toll booth was supposed to be reserved for the entry of ambulances and those who have been exempt from paying the toll like legislators/MPs, most of such reserved booths had remained closed.

Different norms

The Speaker pointed out that there were different norms related to FASTags as they come under the purview of the Centre. Hence a meeting of officials would be convened to discuss the issue, he said.

Early 8th century Telugu inscription discovered in A.P.

The Hindu Bureau
AMARAVATI

A Telugu inscription dating back to the 8th century CE has been discovered at Pitikayagulla village in Bestavaripeta mandal of Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh, shedding light on the evolution of the Telugu language and early published works in the region.

The inscription was engraved on a stone slab erected in front of the historic Pitikesvara temple. Written in Telugu language and characters of the 8th century CE, the record is considered significant for both epigraphical and historical studies.

The four-line inscription reads: "*Svastisri Nandelu*

The inscription was engraved on a stone slab erected in front of the Pitikesvara temple.

Vari, Chensinavanthu Prani, Milli Achari," and "*Padasina Nava Katta*". Epigraphists interpret the inscription as recording the construction of a new embankment (*nava katta*). The work is attributed to Pranimilli Achari, identified as a sculptor or craftsman, indicating the active role of artisans in public infrastructure during that period. The reference is believed to date to a time when the Renadu region was under royal administration, although the name of the ruling king is not mentioned in the text.

K. Muniratnam Reddy, Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), said the inscription represents a new epigraphical exploration. He noted that such early Telugu records are crucial for understanding the transition of Telugu from Prakrit influences to an independent literary and administrative language.

65 tribal students skip classes in Munnar as cooking gas shortage hits school hostel

The Hindu Bureau
IDUKKI

A delay by officials of the Tribal Department in ensuring the timely supply of cooking gas at a pre-matric hostel in Munnar, Kerala has forced 65 tribal girls to skip their classes and return to their settlements.

According to members of the tribal community, the affected students – studying in Classes V to X – belong to remote regions such as Edamalakkudy, Vattavada, Mankulam, Chinnakkanal, and Adimaly and study in the Munnar Government High School. The shortage of cooking gas reportedly disrupted meal preparation for over 15 days.

Although hostel authori-

The affected students are studying in the Munnar Government High School and belong to remote regions. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ties tried to buy cylinders on their own and use firewood, irregular meal timings alarmed parents, who withdrew their children. A community member from Edamalakkudy said that families had to spend more than ₹10,000 on vehicle fares to transport the children.

"Officials failed to arrange cylinders on time and are treating tribal students like second-class citizens. Due to this negligence, the children have already lost more than a week of schooling," he alleged.

Adimaly Assistant Tribal Development Officer Prasad A. said the department usually procures cooking gas from the Kanan Devan Hills Company (KDHP) agency through a credit arrangement.

"Payments are generally made the following month. We believed all dues had been cleared, but the agency stopped the supply citing pending arrears," he said. He added that officials tried to manage the situation by borrowing cylinders from a Model Residential School. But, fearing a complete disruption of food supply, parents took their children home on Monday. However, sources at the KDHP contradicted the official's claims, stating that gas distribution was halted only after unpaid dues mounted.

Manufacturing woes

Capital support alone will not add to battery cell manufacturing capacity

India's quest to install 500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030 has found its primary industrial engine in the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes. Buoyed by the momentum the scheme generated in telecom manufacturing, where the government pays out a predetermined sum only if companies achieve agreed sales targets annually, ministries expect the initiative to transform India from a net importer of green technology into a global manufacturing hub. Unlike telecom, however, the PLI for high-efficiency solar photovoltaics and advanced chemistry cell battery storage face daunting implementation challenges. While downstream module assembly is robust (achieving 56% of its specific target by mid-2025), the critical upstream segments remain a bottleneck. Polysilicon and wafer manufacturing, the most technology-intensive parts of the value chain, have only reached 14% and 10% of their respective targets. This disparity highlights a persistent reliance on imported raw materials and specialised technical expertise, prompting the government to consider additional capital subsidies to de-risk these high-capex upstream projects.

Similar woes stalk the scheme for battery manufacturing. The progress towards establishing 50 GWh of domestic battery cell production to fuel the electric vehicle revolution, with an outlay of ₹18,000 crore, has been sluggish. By late 2025, only about 2.8% (1.4 GWh) of the targeted capacity had been commissioned. The gap between policy ambition and ground reality in battery manufacturing stems from stringent domestic value addition requirements – mandating 25% within two years and 60% within five – and the immense technical barriers of "gigafactory" construction. To add to these are challenges such as not issuing visas to Chinese technical experts, who will be setting up several manufacturing facilities. The Indian government's expectation that mere capital support will substantially improve high-technology manufacturing is misplaced. The complex infrastructure required to make it at scale requires decades of research investment and workforce training. While mega corporates expect international technology transfers to accelerate the process, they are capital intensive and do not always translate to near-term gain. Several companies face steep fines for not delivering on their deadlines. A relook at provisions in the PLI scheme to prioritise expertise and technical know-how rather than the net worth of companies bidding for PLI contracts is necessary.

Pressure points

Trump's strategy to keep pushing Caracas can only lead to a breaking point

What is unfolding in Venezuela is naked imperialism. Having ordered the abduction of a sitting head of state and imposed a naval blockade on a sovereign nation, U.S. President Donald Trump declared that Washington would now "run" Venezuela. That he endorsed Acting President Delcy Rodriguez rather than the opposition does not diminish the criminality of these actions; it merely reveals their purpose, which was not about democracy or narcotics but about control of Venezuela's oil. The Trump administration's approach might appear contradictory: help retain the Bolivarian regime while strangling its economic sovereignty. But the logic is coherent. Washington wants Venezuela's oil without the costs of occupation or the chaos of regime change. It learned from Iraq that dismantling state structures creates insurgencies. It believes that it is better to capture the existing apparatus and redirect its functions – a form of neocolonialism that maintains the forms of statehood while exercising actual control.

This arrangement places Ms. Rodriguez in a difficult position. The Bolivarian movement was built on resisting precisely this kind of American domination over Venezuela's resources. Yet her government, battered by a decade of sanctions, must now negotiate with the very power that kidnapped her predecessor. Her statement on Sunday, "Enough already of Washington's orders over politicians in Venezuela", reveals the strain that she is under. She has complied with American demands on oil trade and released political prisoners as a "peace gesture". But she cannot surrender Venezuelan sovereignty entirely without losing the Chavista base that sustains her government. The more pressure Washington applies on Caracas, the more it risks the very instability it claims to want to prevent. If the U.S. wanted a productive economic relationship with Venezuela, it should not have embarked on this marauding path. The sanctions that devastated Venezuela's economy were American policy. The migration crisis that Mr. Trump cited to justify intervention was a consequence of those sanctions. Now, Washington offers to ease the pressure it created, but only if Venezuela submits to exclusive American control over its resources. This is not diplomacy; it is extortion. The world cannot remain silent. When Russia violated Ukrainian sovereignty, the international community condemned it and imposed sanctions. Mr. Trump's 'Donroe Doctrine' threatens not just Venezuela, but the foundations of the international order. If it remains unchallenged internationally, no nation in the Global South can be safe.

The solution to the falling rupee lies in diplomacy

C. Rangarajan
Former Governor
Reserve Bank of India

N.R. Bhanumurthy
Director, Madras School of Economics, Chennai

The sudden decline in the value of the rupee has somewhat shaken the people and the markets. They wonder why this is happening when the economy is doing well, characterised by a good growth rate, low inflation, and a modest current account deficit.

India's growth rate in the current year is estimated at 7.4%. Inflation has been subdued with CPI inflation ending the year 2025 at 1.33%, below the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s lower target band for the fourth consecutive month. The current account deficit as a percentage of GDP in the first half of 2025-26 is only 0.76 compared to 1.35 in the previous year. The fall in the value of rupee since April 2025 is about 6%.

The villain of the piece

Since the trade deficit (merchandise and services), which was $96.58 billion in April-December 2025 compared to $88.43 billion in the same period last year, is not that large, the main villain in the piece is capital outflows. There has been a steady outflow of capital since U.S. President Donald Trump took an adverse view on India and imposed 50% import duty on Indian exports. Initially, the U.S. imposed a 25% tariff on 'reciprocal' basis and then another 25% because India was importing crude oil from Russia. Now, it is threatening to impose an additional 25% tariff on countries that are doing business with Iran. This includes India, although trade with Iran is only 0.15% of the country's total trade.

Net capital inflows in April-December 2024 were $10,615 million. In the same period in 2025, they turned negative, with a net outflow of $3,900 million. Despite months of negotiations with the U.S., no agreement has been reached yet. There seem to have been issues that could not be resolved easily. If this stalemate continues, the rupee will continue to fall.

We have to note that in the changed context, capital outflows are caused not by strict economic factors but by fears generated by the 'hostile' attitude of the U.S. In 2022, the rupee depreciated by almost 10%. That had some economic explanation, such as the Federal Reserve's sharp hikes in interest rates. But this time, there is no clear economic explanation. Thus, the situation has shifted from the economic arena to the diplomatic platform. When tariffs are getting weaponised for geopolitical reasons, diplomacy is the major route for a solution.

> Capital outflows are hitting the rupee. These outflows will continue to take place until India and the U.S. come to an understanding

RBI intervention

India's exchange rate regime underwent a change in 1993 when it moved to a market-determined exchange rate regime. But the new system did not rule out the RBI's intervention in the foreign exchange market. Since 1993, all RBI Governors have made it clear that the intention is not to use intervention to peg the value of the rupee, but to reduce its volatility.

However, the word 'volatility' was never defined. We can deduce from the actions of the RBI that reducing volatility means not only reducing fluctuations around a prevailing level, but also 'moderating' the fall in the value of the rupee when it happens. Shocks from rupee fluctuations have a cost. It is only to minimise the impact of such sudden shocks that there is intervention. Even then, it is not the intention of the RBI to prevent the fall, but to let it slide smoothly to whatever level it has to fall. It may be best for the RBI to clarify that reducing volatility also includes moderating the fall in the value of the rupee. After all, intervention, especially if it is asymmetric, does affect the level of exchange rate while minimising its volatility. The present situation adds another element – non-economic pressures acting on the value of the rupee. In fact, if India and the U.S. come to an understanding, the rupee will appreciate.

Why devaluation is not the remedy

Will a fall in the value of the rupee have any beneficial effects? The import content of India's exports is rising. As a result, the stimulus to exports provided by devaluation will be moderated in the changed context. Further, given the high tariffs in the U.S. market, India's exporters are unlikely to gain significant access there. On the import side, most of India's imports are essential goods, with crude oil alone accounting for about 25% of total merchandise imports. A fall in the rupee would raise their prices, fuelling inflation.

India's inflation is not higher than the inflation in developed countries in the West. Devaluation is called for when there is wide disparity in inflation. That is when we need to focus on Real Effective Exchange Rate (weighted average of a country's currency relative to a basket of major trading partners, adjusted for inflation). It is true that some countries such as China have tried to keep the value of the currency undervalued. But this is currency manipulation, which is controversial.

The fall in the value of the rupee in the last one month has been caused by the fears engendered by the imposition of 50% tariff on Indian exports by the U.S. There is a possibility that the tariffs may even go up because of new legislation in the U.S. The full impact of the tariffs will be felt only in 2026-27.

What is hitting the rupee as of now are capital outflows. These outflows will continue to take place until India and the U.S. come to an understanding. We cannot ignore the fall in the value of the rupee. Capital outflows will get accelerated with every fall in the value of the rupee. The required earning in rupee terms will rise to attract investors in such a situation. When capital outflows happen because of the sale of stocks, they have a direct impact on the stock market. Our trade negotiators must reach an early understanding with the U.S. Meanwhile, the RBI can only smoothen the fall in the value of the rupee.

A spark to drive India's e-LCV transition

Moorthy Nair
Researcher at the International Council on Clean Transportation

Whenever your online orders are delivered, there is a good chance that they travelled in a light commercial vehicle (LCV) – those small (sub-3.5 tonne) trucks that are the backbone of India's booming e-commerce economy. Here is a fact: while India has spent years regulating passenger car energy consumption, LCVs have operated in a regulatory blind spot. India has made significant strides in regulating fuel efficiency for passenger cars through corporate average fuel efficiency (CAFE) norms for fleet-wide CO2 emission targets. However, LCVs operate without such mandates, despite their high utilisation and substantial market presence.

Policymakers are finally addressing this regulatory gap: in late July, 2025, the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) unveiled a fuel consumption standard proposal for LCVs, which will run from 2027 through 2032.

Ahead of the release of the draft, automakers lobbied for full exemption of LCVs from CAFE regulations, citing the price sensitivity of the market and claiming that the standard would necessitate expensive technologies in internal combustion engines (ICE). Eventually, the request was set aside, signalling the government's commitment to decarbonisation.

LCVs in India accounted for 48% of commercial goods vehicles in 2024, yet electrification remained low at 2%. Bringing this sector under regulatory oversight is pivotal for India's clean transport agenda.

Where things stand

India's LCV fleet averaged 147.5 g CO2/km in 2024. Without the minimal 2% share of battery electric LCVs (e-LCVs), this figure would be 150 g CO2/km, which shows how even marginal electrification impacts emissions.

Automakers have entered the Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) market with few models, offering sub-35 kWh battery packs with maximum ranges of 150 km. Why so cautious? Market realities are tough: high upfront costs and limited model availability constrain demand. Although battery LCVs offer lower total ownership costs than conventional LCVs, inconsistent purchase incentive policies among jurisdictions are not helping.

> The proposed fuel efficiency norms for light commercial vehicles could become a turning point — with smart policy design, stringent standards, and strategic use of incentives

For example, the PM E-DRIVE incentive scheme excludes LCVs, though some State policies, such as those in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, provide support to overcome the initial acquisition barrier.

Fuel efficiency standards

The potential of fuel efficiency standards to drive electrification is often misunderstood. While these regulations won't guarantee widespread electrification, stringency does. When standards are lax, manufacturers find it cheaper to optimise existing ICE vehicles through modest upgrades than invest in electric vehicles. Here is proof of what happens when standards are too relaxed: BEVs make up just 3% of the passenger car fleet even after 8 years of CAFE norms.

Here is where the math gets interesting. ICCT research shows 116.5 g CO2/km is the crucial threshold at which introducing e-LCVs becomes more cost-effective for compliance than ICE-only advancements. Put simply, beyond this point, CO2 reductions cost manufacturers less if achieved through electrification than ICE upgrades. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency's proposed 115 g CO2/km standard just surpasses this benchmark, meaning entry of e-LCVs into the market is feasible but not strong enough to drive significant electrification.

There is a chicken-and-egg problem here: most conventional LCVs cost below ₹1 million, while BEV equivalents typically exceed this, making manufacturers reluctant to transition. Electrification momentum spurs innovation, scales production, and, together with falling battery prices, reduces BEV upfront cost.

To catalyse BEV penetration, regions such as China, the European Union, and the United States use a super credit multiplier, which counts each BEV multiple times when calculating compliance. Think of it as regulatory accounting that makes going electric look more attractive on paper: super credits make electrification a more cost-effective pathway to compliance.

The draft proposal introduces super credits for e-LCVs and assigns them a CO2 value of zero for compliance, further reinforcing BEV support (unlike the passenger car standards, which include upstream emissions).

However, the proposal also extends these credits to intermediate technologies like hybrid BEVs and applies CO2 offset factors to select ICE technologies. This approach risks fragmenting the market, essentially postponing BEV adoption. If manufacturers can comply by tweaking conventional vehicles or adding hybrids, why invest in electrification? Credits and offset factors – designed as an interim measure to be phased out as the market matures – can ease early compliance by artificially amplifying the emission reductions but dilute the regulation's effectiveness.

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency's proposal considers phasing out super credits for e-LCVs but continuing incentives for hybrids and select ICE technologies. This could prolong the dominance of ICEs.

The way forward

So, what is the bottom line? India has got the pieces; now it needs to put them together. The key to electrification lies in smart policy design. A stringent standard that makes electrification economically compelling, and a strategic use of incentives, can drive genuine transformation. These elements, together with a timely rollout of regulations, will determine whether LCVs drive the transition to clean transport.

The alternative is to repeat the challenges seen in the passenger car segment, where relaxed standards and ongoing incentives have kept electrification at just 3%.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Republic Day

Republic Day presents an excellent opportunity to showcase the nation's achievements and progress ("Editorial: March of the Republic," Jan. 27). But in the midst of these celebrations, we should not divert our focus from critical issues. India cannot be peaceful if its neighbours are not peaceful. With the world going through turbulent times, and with Manipur still on the boil, India's challenges are both internal and external and need urgent redressal.

Balasubramaniam Pavani
Secunderabad

Entry for all

The report, "Uttarakhand's Char Dham temples want ban on entry of non-Hindus" (Jan. 28), is shocking. When I, a practising Hindu, went to the Golden Temple in Amritsar, I was not barred from entry, nor was I asked to show my religious identity. As long as people are dressed in accordance with the temple's code, follow all the rules, and do not in any way disrespect the religion or the god, they should be allowed to enter the premises of a place of worship.

Baru Rajendra Prasad
Hyderabad

Granting protection

The uproar over the UGC's rules brings back memories of the anti-reservation stir of 1990 ("Uproar intensifies against new UGC equity regulations", Jan. 27). Caste-based discrimination is still a lived experience for students from many communities and its persistence stresses the need for protections against it. The bogey of 'false complaints' cannot be cited to plead the case against the new rules. The government cannot afford to cave in to the pressure tactics by certain student bodies and social elites; it should side with the marginalised.

G. David Milton
Maruthancode, Kanniyakumari

Operating with impunity

The killing of Alex Pretti, a 37-year-old nurse in Minneapolis, barely weeks after the fatal shooting of Renee Good in the same city, has once again raised troubling questions about the conduct of U.S. federal immigration agencies ("Minneapolis locals protest inhumane U.S. agents after second killing by ICE," Jan. 26). Even before an impartial investigation could begin, Pretti was labelled a "domestic terrorist," reflecting a disturbing rush to judgment. Since Donald Trump's return to power on a hard line anti-immigrant platform, agencies such as ICE and Border Patrol appear to have been granted expansive powers with little accountability. While these bodies are mandated to protect national security, the prevailing climate of impunity has resulted in a sharp rise in deaths and detentions in custody in 2025. It looks like U.S. citizens with no criminal history are increasingly becoming victims of federal overreach.

M. Jeyaram
Sholavandan, Madurai

President Trump argues that the protests in Iran to overthrow the regime is legitimate and has warned of dire consequences in case the protesters are killed. However, when the U.S. uses violence to impose order within its own territory, it is presented as proportionate, legitimate, and necessary. It is high time the world raises its voice against this hypocrisy.

Gregory Fernandes
Mumbai

Conferring Padma awards

Padma Awards and the Bharat Ratna are often awarded posthumously, with only a few exceptions, such as Sachin Tendulkar, Lata Mangeshkar, and Dr. C.N.R. Rao ("Full list of Padma awards, 2025"). Playback singer S. Janaki famously refused to accept the Padma Bhushan in January 2013, saying it came too late in her career. Bharat Ratna award recommendations are made directly by the Prime Minister to the President. In 2024, the Modi government declared five Bharat Ratnas, highlighting the timing's political overtones. It is time to delink these awards from election cycles and establish an independent, permanent commission tasked with recommending living legends and achievers based solely on merit.

A.V. Narayanan
Chennai

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Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

BCCL listing redefines PSE IPO narrative

S. Mahendra Dev

Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)

On January 19 this year, Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL), India's largest producer of coking coal and a subsidiary of Coal India Limited, listed on the stock market through an Initial Public Offering (IPO). Despite challenging global market conditions, the BCCL's IPO created capital market history as the highest ever recorded in India's mainboard IPO market. The 46 crore shares that were on offer to raise an additional ₹1,070 crore received over 90 lakh applications and were oversubscribed 147 times. This successful IPO listing of an Indian Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) is not a one-off but a trend that has been consistent over the past several years. Over the past 7-8 years, close to 15 Public Sector Undertakings have been listed in the Indian stock exchanges and have not only been able to raise the required money but also create a tremendous amount of shareholder value and retailer wealth.

Shareholder value creation

Prior to BCCL, since 2017, India has seen more than 10 large core engineering-, construction-, railways-, defence-, and energy-related PSEs get listed in the stock markets. They have consistently created value for both retail shareholders and the largest owner of PSE stocks – the Government of India. Among the companies analysed, the cumulative market capitalisation rose from ₹1.4 lakh crore at listing to ₹8.53 lakh crore as on December 31, 2025 – a whopping 513% increase.

The companies analysed were Cochin Shipyard, Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, RITES Ltd., IRCON International, Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd., Indian Railway Finance Corporation, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation, RailTel Corporation, Housing and Urban Development Corporation, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), and Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency.

While the study excluded services sector IPOs, such as banking and insurance, whose performances are driven by additional extraneous factors, the Government has also benefited tremendously from the listing of services-related PSEs.

In summary, the IPO route has not only provided Indian PSEs robust mechanisms to raise capital for productive use without depending on the Government's budget process but also provide phenomenal returns to the Government and to its retail shareholders.

PSUs funding initiatives

Earlier, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) had to rely on budgetary provisions from their administrative ministries for capital investments and other expansions. This required extensive discussions with a large group of stakeholders and a longer cycle for realising the money. In today's age when the modern enterprise is recognised for its agility in decision-making and execution, the budget route can no longer be looked at as the only medium for raising or receiving investments.

Not surprisingly, a reverse trend has quietly begun to take shape where PSUs have started to fund critical missions. For example, in January 2025, the Ministry of Mines launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) to secure a long-term sustainable supply of critical minerals and strengthen India's critical mineral value chain. The Cabinet approved an expenditure of ₹34,300 crore for NCMM of which only ₹1,500 crore is being sourced from the Government's budget. In a truly 'Whole of Government Approach', more than 50% of the Mission's expenditure, an amount of ₹18,000 crore, is being funded by PSUs across various administrative ministries. Quite aptly, the investments being raised by these PSEs are being plowed into technologies and know-how that are being used to reduce coal-based carbon emissions.

The above example may now become the norm in the Government's funding of critical and strategic missions in which the PSEs are tapped in as strategic investors as seen in the NCMM.

Administrative quality

Markets are known to be remarkably brutal and unforgiving as they only reward consistent performance and shareholder value creation. One of the most striking elements of the BCCL narrative is its journey from being perceived as a loss-impacted PSU to a value-driven, strategically critical enterprise. Today, BCCL accounts for nearly 58.5% of India's domestic coking coal production, placing it at the heart of the steel and infrastructure value chain. This strategic relevance was not lost on investors. In an economy focused on infrastructure expansion, manufacturing growth, and self-reliance, BCCL represents more than a coal producer; it represents energy security and industrial continuity.

The performance of other PSEs is evidence of a broader shift in how PSE assets are being positioned and perceived. Investors today are increasingly discerning and are willing to back PSEs when they see clarity of purpose, operational strength, and credible execution. PSEs have also used the recent autonomy granted from their administrative ministries and the transparency expected from the reporting framework of market exchanges as an opportunity to bring in administrative quality, strategic planning and speed in execution. This renewed confidence is already shaping the next phase of PSE market participation as more IPOs are being planned. The old narrative that PSE IPOs are uninspiring has been put to rest, and in its place stands a powerful new reality – when the story is real, the markets listen.

Investors today are increasingly discerning and are willing to back PSEs when they see clarity of purpose, operational strength, and credible execution

A political dust storm over Singareni

Congress and BRS play mudslinging over 'irregularities' in coal mining tenders

STATE OF PLAY

B. Chandrashekhar
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Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL), the 140-year-old State Public Sector Undertaking in Telangana, has been in the news for all the wrong reasons in recent weeks. The Opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) and the ruling Congress have been sparring over alleged irregularities in tenders for removal of overburden (the layer of soil, rock, and ecosystem that lies above a coal seam) in the coal mines.

The ruling party has been pushed onto the back foot by the BRS and has struggled to mount an effective rebuttal. The BRS has alleged that the tender norms were tailored to benefit senior Congress leaders and their relatives.

Buoyed by the encouraging results in the Gram Panchayat (GP) elections held in December last year, the BRS has stepped up its attack on the ruling party. The Congress claimed that candidates backed by it won about 60% of the 12,733 Sarpanch posts, which is seen by the Opposition as an underperformance by a ruling party. The BRS claimed over 40% success rate in the GP polls held on non-party basis. Ahead of the upcoming election to urban local bodies, which is fought on party symbols, the party has upped its game.

The row over the Singareni tenders erupted when senior BRS leader and former Minister T. Harish Rao alleged irregularities on January 19. The BRS's main target in the matter is not Deputy Chief Minister M. Bhatti Vikramarka, who handles the portfolio of Energy under which the SCCL operates. Rather, it is Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. The party says the Chief Minister got the 'site visit certification' system introduced in the tenders with a view to favour his brother-in-law S. Srujan Reddy's companies, with bids quoted at a value much higher than the estimates prepared by the company.

Soon after the BRS raised the allegations, Mr. Harish Rao, party working president K.T. Rama Rao, and party leader R.S. Praveen Kumar received notices from the special investigation team (SIT) in the phone-tapping case, asking them to appear before it for examination as witnesses. The Opposition party wasted no time in playing the victim card, alleging that the leaders were served notices as part of the ruling party's plans to harass them for making the "scam" public.

In a vain bid, Deputy Chief Minister Vikramarka tried to rebut the allegations, stating that the norm/condition of site visit certification was in practice in many Central PSUs, Departments and PSUs of other States, and that in SCCL too, it was introduced in 2018 when the BRS was in power. He also read out some documents which impose the site visit condition, as an attempt to turn the tables on the Opposition party. However, the BRS took it as another opportunity to corner the ruling party.

"Mr. Vikramarka read out only the portions that were convenient for him to do some mudslinging on the Opposition and did not tell people the fact that the site visit condition introduced by SCCL when the BRS was in power was only for establishing coal handling plants (CHPs) and not for the overburden removal contracts," Mr. Rao said.

The BRS claims the site visit condition for overburden removal contracts was introduced as recently as May 2025 and some of the tenders finalised till that time from December 2023, when the Congress assumed office, were as per the old procedures without the site visit condition. Those tenders were locked for values/rates lower than the SCCL's estimates, saving money for the company, it says.

The BRS is of the view that all the overburden removal contracts given after May 2025 merit cancellation on the same grounds on which the Naini mine development and operation (MDO) contract, which too had the condition of site visit, was cancelled. The party has demanded a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or any other Central agency or a sitting judge into the Singareni contracts, saying that a probe by a State agency would be unfair since the Chief Minister's kin are the main beneficiaries.

It remains to be seen whether the government will order a probe into all overburden removal contracts since June 2014, when Telangana was formed. This would be in line with probes ordered in cases such as the sinking of a portion of the Medigadda Barrage under the Kaleshwaram project, to clear itself of the charges and instead fix the BRS by exposing any misdeeds.

Future of work: India's youth under the new Codes

The four Labour Codes aim to promote formalisation of employment and improve ease of doing business; gap in coverage of benefits is a major challenge

DATA POINT

Devika Vinod
Meenakshi Shekhar

India's Labour Codes came into force in November 2025, marking the most significant labour law reform since Independence. By consolidating 29 central laws into four Codes, the reform aims to simplify compliance, universalise minimum wages, expand social protection, and modernise workplace regulation. Policy debates often portray the Codes as a balancing act between labour flexibility and worker protection.

Prior to the consolidation, India's labour regime was fragmented across multiple Central and State laws governing wages, industrial relations, social security, and working conditions. With labour on the Concurrent List, this resulted in uneven enforcement and wide inter-State variation. Crucially, most protections applied only to the formal sector, leaving informal, contract, and casual workers, who form the bulk of the workforce, outside the scope of regulation. Against this backdrop, the government introduced four Labour Codes between 2019 and 2020.

In 2024, India's median age was under 30, compared to around 40 in China and 50 in Japan. With nearly half the population still young, understanding how these changes affect youth employment is critical.

Despite its demographic advantage, India faces a pronounced youth employment crisis. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023-24, labour force participation among those aged 15-29 stood at 46.5%, far below the 76.4% observed among those aged 30-59. Youth unemployment is 10.2%, compared to less than 1% for older adults.

Gender disparities further widen these gaps. Only 28.8% of young women participate in the labour force, compared to 63.5% of young men. In urban areas, unemployment among young women reached 20.1%.

Across all PLFS rounds, young workers are more likely than adults to be unpaid family workers within self-employment. They are disproportionately concentrated in informal employment. In 2023-24, nearly 90% of young workers were informally employed. Even within regular salaried jobs, 60.5% of young regular workers lacked social security, compared to 50.5% among workers above 30.

Contractual insecurity is also higher among youth. In 2023-24, 66.1% of young regular workers had no written contract, versus 53.6% for older ones. Only 16.5% of young workers had long-term contracts exceeding three years, compared to 35.4% among adults.

Young workers are also overrepresented in platform-based gig work. A NITI Aayog estimate suggests that 77 lakh workers were engaged in the gig economy in 2020-21, a figure projected to rise to 2.35 crore by 2029-30.

Against this backdrop, the new Labour Codes aim to promote formalisation while improving the ease of doing business. The introduction of a statutory national floor wage could raise earnings for young workers clustered in low-paid, entry-level jobs. If firms increasingly rely on fixed-term contracts, the Codes mandate parity in wages and benefits with permanent workers.

The requirement of appointment letters for all workers and guaranteed wage payments, even during leave, strengthens baseline employment security. The Code on Social Security extends welfare schemes covering health, maternity, disability, education, and skill development to unorganised workers. Gig and platform workers are explicitly recognised in national law, with provisions for registration from age 16 and the creation of National and State Social Security Boards. Unlike the earlier Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act (2008), which had limited impact, the new Code offers clearer institutional mechanisms.

Labour market transparency is also enhanced through mandatory vacancy reporting to career centres. The Industrial Relations Code further affects youth employment by reducing hiring frictions through a higher retrenchment threshold. It provides legal clarity for contract labour and fixed-term employment categories dominated by young workers while extending benefits such as leave, health cover, social security, and gratuity to fixed-term employees after just one year of service.

However, several challenges remain. Many provisions for unorganised and gig workers mirror those under the 2008 Act, including a size-based definition of enterprises with fewer than 10 workers. PLFS 2023-24 shows that 42.7% of young workers lack written contracts, and nearly one-fifth of them work in enterprises with more than 10 workers, leaving significant gaps in coverage. Discretionary language in provisions for gig workers and weak statistical definitions of digital platform employment complicate coverage, especially given widespread multiple job-holding. Despite the Second National Commission on Labour having urged the government as early as 2002 to modernise labour protections in response to technological change and evolving work arrangements, two decades later, policy follow-through and statistical innovation have been slow.

These gaps point to an urgent need for stronger labour data systems and proactive worker registration. Identifying gig and platform workers in national surveys, instead of subsuming them under broad self-employment categories, would strengthen policy design and protection.

Devika Vinod is a Research Associate at CAFRAL. Meenakshi Shekhar, Ph.D is a Research Director at CAFRAL.

Labour shift

Statistics used in this article are from Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)

Chart 1: Compositon of employment among 15-29 year olds and 30-59 year olds across PLFS rounds between 2017 and 2024

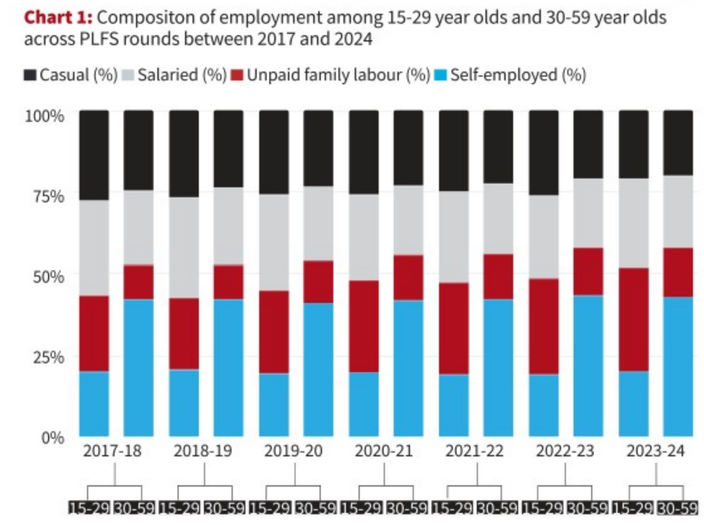
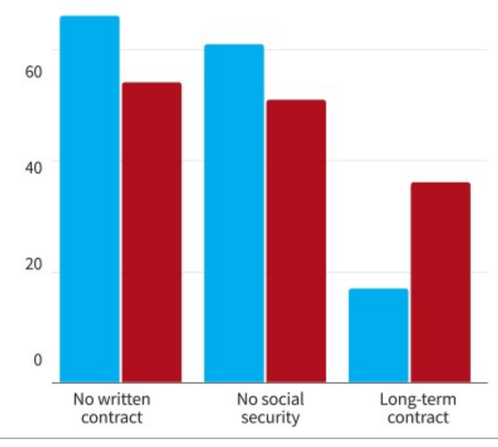


Chart 2: Types of informality of jobs among regular salaried workers in 15-29 and 30-59 age groups

Share (%) among 15–29 year olds

Share (%) among 30-59 year olds

Contractual insecurity is higher among youth. Only 16.5% of young workers had long-term contracts exceeding three years



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 28, 1976

Kalinadi Vital for South, Says Pant

Ambika Nagar (North Kanara), Jan. 27: The giant Kalinadi power project would open up possibilities for the southern States to take advantage of one another's thermal and hydel capacities for the common good of the entire region, the Union Minister of State for Energy, Mr. K. C. Pant, said here today.

It was one of the most important power projects of the country, he said while unveiling a plaque at a function at the Nagjhari power house site to mark the signing of the loan agreement for the hydel project in Kuwait today.

Mr. Pant said the loan of Rs. 45 crores being provided by Kuwait represented an important step in the direction of strengthening of relations between the two countries. It was only proper, he said, that developing countries helped each other and enlarged their area of co-operation.

Mr. Pant spoke of the special interest shown by the Centre in the Kalinadi project right from the beginning and referred to the Central assistance of Rs. 25 crores given during 1972-74 and the Rs. 5 crores provided by the Life Insurance Corporation. During 1975-76, an additional Rs. 10 crores had been allocated on the understanding that the State would find Rs. 5 crores.

Mr. Devaraj Urs, Karnataka Chief Minister, said the Kalinadi project would open the door for further economic development of the State.

Describing the Kalinadi project as a complex one consisting of 10 dams, Mr. Urs said the first stage would help produce 910 mw., the second 210 mw., and the third 100 mw., making a total of 1,231 mw.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 28, 1926

'Looking in' in London

London, Jan. 27: "Looking in," the new verbal coinage, denotes the receiving of tele-vision programme, which will begin to be broadcast from a small London station next week under the licence granted by the Postmaster-General to a new company to exploit the patent of the Glasgow inventor named John Baird for special receiving apparatus adaptable to any valve set. Demonstrations have been successfully conducted, though experiments will be necessary to give sharper definition to figures.

From Page One

‘Mother of all deals’: India-EU finalise FTA

This would include certain marine products, processed food items, and arms and ammunition. Over and above this, 6% of India’s exports will see tariff reductions including certain poultry products, preserved vegetables, bakery products, amongst others.

“Key labour-intensive sectors comprising more than ₹2.87 lakh crore [$33 billion] of exports that are currently subjected to import duty between 4% to 26% in the EU and are crucial for employment generation, will enter zero duty from entry into force of the FTA and thus gain enhanced competitiveness in the EU market,” the Ministry said in a release.

In particular, of the sectors that India primarily exports to the EU, the following will see duties eliminated entirely: marine products (current duties of up to 26%), chemicals (12.8% currently), plastic and rubber items (6.5%), leather footwear (17%), textiles and apparel (12% each), base metals (10%), gems and jewellery (4%), furniture and allied consumer goods (10.5%), and toys and sports goods (4.7%).

On services, the EU has agreed to commitments across 144 services sub sectors, including IT/ITeS, professional services, education, and other business services.

What India has conceded

Overall, India is offering duty elimination and reductions on 92.1% of the tariff lines, which comprises 97.5% of the EU exports to India. Within this, 49.6% of the tariff lines will see an immediate duty elimination once the agreement comes into effect.

Another 39.5% of the tariff lines will be subject to a phased elimination of tariffs over five, seven, and 10 years. An additional 3% of products will see phased tariff reductions.

“Imports of EU’s high technology goods are expected to diversify India’s import sources, thereby reducing input costs for businesses, benefit consumers and will create opportunities for Indian businesses to integrate into global supply chains,” the statement added.

Notably for the EU, the following European sectors will see duty-free access to the Indian markets: machinery and electrical equipment, aircraft and spacecraft, optical, medical and surgical equipment, plastics, precious stones and metals, chemicals, motor vehicles, iron and steel, pharmaceuticals, and various agricultural products.

On services, India has agreed to open up 102 sub sectors covering EU priorities such as professional, business, telecommunications, maritime, financial, and environmental services.

It has been learnt that negotiations over a few sectors such as automobiles and wine had caused some problems, but the two sides agreed to quota based systems that were satisfactory to both sides.

‘No discrimination under new UGC rules’

“I assure you that whatever system or arrangement is made in India will be within the framework of the Constitution. No injustice, oppression, or discrimination will be committed against anyone,” he said.

On Tuesday, students protested against the regulations outside Lucknow University and in parts of Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, in Indore in Madhya Pradesh, and outside the UGC office in New Delhi. Students from Delhi University have also called for a protest on Wednesday.

The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, the student wing of RSS, on Tuesday also issued a statement, saying that while the new regulations were “well-intentioned”, they required “clarity and balance”. This statement quoted ABVP national general secretary Virendra Singh Solanki as saying that “there must be social equality for all sections of society”.

Meanwhile, the National Students’ Union of India, the Congress’ student wing, backed the regulations as a “necessary step towards addressing discrimination on campuses across the country”. NSUI national president Varun Choudhary expressed support for the framework in post on X.

On Tuesday, Rajya Sabha Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi doubled down on her argument that the new regulations were discriminatory against certain sections.

Students stage stir against rules in U.P.

Mrigendra Upadhyay, a BJP leader from Balrampur, said such rules would adversely impact upper caste students and portray them as culprits in case of complaints filed under the new framework.

“We need strong upper caste leaders to fight for our rights and raise our voice against discrimination in any form,” he said. A few BJP leaders holding posts in district organisational units of Lucknow also resigned in protest. Earlier, Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council member and BJP leader Devendra Pratap Singh also questioned the regulations and called for a broader discussion.

In a related development, the State Government on January 26 suspended Bareilly City Magistrate and Provincial Civil Service (PCS) officer Alankar Agnihotri after he submitted his resignation from service, questioning government policies, including the UGC guidelines.

In a first, private technical staff set to assist officials in digital Census

Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India Mritunjay Kumar Narayan tells States and Union Territories that the target is to ‘get the digitised data from the field itself’; manpower will be hired on contract through outsourcing agencies

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Census officials conducting a pre-test exercise in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh in November last year. R.V. MOORTHY

In a first, private technical staff will be engaged to assist government officials during the Census enabling the “release of Census data in the shortest possible time”, sources said.

The Population Census 2027, the first phase of which will begin on April 1 and conclude on September 30, will be the first-ever digital census in the country where the enumerators, mostly government school teachers, will capture details through mobile applications on their personal phones.

Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) Mritunjay Kumar Narayan has written to the State governments that with the introduction of initiatives such as data collection through mobile applications and the use of the Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS), the Houselisting Block Creator (HLBC) Web application, self-enumeration portal and so on, the Census of India 2027 will be technologically intensive with a “target to get the digitised data from the field itself”.

The letter added that assistance in terms of hired technical manpower would be provided to assist Census officials.

In addition to this, multitasking staff (MTS) for office assistance would be provided at the State and district levels. “The manpower will be hired for a maximum period of 18 months starting from January 2026,” the RG&CCI said.

The State governments have been asked to ensure that the hired personnel are suitably qualified to handle the digital applications and other related work.

Terms of remuneration

“The maximum monthly remuneration for Technical Assistant will be ₹25,000 per month and for MTS ₹18,000 per month. Apart from this amount, no other financial assistance with respect to the manpower will be provided by the Government of India. Further, this assistance, being provided to States/Union Territories for the work of Census 2027, is for a maximum period of 18 months. Thereafter, this assistance will automatically cease to exist and there shall be no liability of the Government of India on this account either financially or otherwise,” the letter said.

The RG&CCI said that the engagement of manpower will be “purely on short-term contractual basis” and the staff will not be entitled to any claims, rights, interests or further benefits in terms of regularisation or consideration of further appointment to any post, including any claims for any casual, ad hoc, temporary or regular service in the government.

Hiring would be done through an outsourcing agency only and not by direct appointment. “All payments be made through outsourcing agency to the hired manpower. Retired government officials may also be considered subject to meeting the suitability for the work,” the letter added.

The RG&CCI has approved four Technical Assistants and two MTS at the State level; two Technical Assistants and one MTS at the district level; two Technical Assistants and one MTS at Municipal Corporations (where a Principal Census Officer is appointed); and one Technical Assistant at the Charge (tehsil) level. There are more than 700 districts in the country.

Around 31 lakh enumerators, who will all be government officials, will be engaged for the Census related field work and they will be paid an honorarium of ₹25,000 each. Each enumerator has to survey 750-800 people.

The honorarium for other Census officers, including nodal officers and clerks, range from ₹30,000 to ₹75,000 each.

States are also being provided with a one-time grant for procurement of computer hardware and software. At the State level, ₹10 lakh each has been sanctioned for IT infrastructure, hiring of vehicles and contingency measures. At the tehsil and district levels, this amount ranges from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh.

No incident after ex-MP flags threat to Bihar homes

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Amid fissures among party leaders in the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee, former three-term MLA, two-time MP, and Union Minister Shakeel Ahmad on Monday apprehended that there could be an attack on him and his residences in Patna and Madhubani the next day.

However, no such attack was reported on Tuesday.

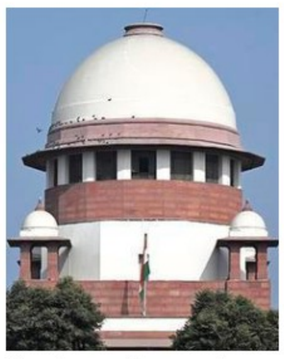
Earlier, on Saturday, Mr. Ahmad had called party leader Rahul Gandhi a “coward and insecure” politician who, he alleged, promotes young leaders who sing paeans within the party.

The former Congress leader had resigned from the party in November 2025.

“Just now, some Congress colleagues secretly informed me that the Congress leadership has directed the Bihar Congress/Youth Congress wing to carry out attack on my residences in Patna and Madhubani on Tuesday under the pretext of burning an effigy. This is against the principles of democracy,” Mr. Ahmad said in a post on social media late at night on Monday.

Plea in SC contests UGC regulations limiting reservation to SC/ST/OBC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



The plea says the new rules deny equal protection of law to a substantial section of citizens.

A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court, assailing the Constitutional validity of Regulation 3(c) of the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026 as discriminatory on the ground that it extends the benefit of reservation only to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and members of the Other Backward Communities (OBC) while denying the same protection to general or upper castes.

The plea filed by an advocate, Vineet Jindal, said the new UGC Regulations denied equal protection of law to a substantial section of citizens solely on the basis of caste.

The 2026 Regulations have superseded the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2012 with the stated objective of fostering equity, inclusion and a discrimination-free academic environment across higher education institutions in line with the National Education Policy, 2020.

“Regulation 3(c) defined ‘caste-based discrimination’ in a narrowly confined manner as discrimination “only on the basis of caste or tribe against the members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes”.

“By design and operation, this definition accords legal recognition of victimhood exclusively to certain reserved categories and categorically excludes persons belonging to general or upper castes from its protective ambit, regardless of the nature, gravity, or context of discrimination suffered by them... Such a definition institutionalises exclusion at the threshold, creates a hierarchy of victimhood, and introduces a Constitutionally impermissible bias into a regulatory framework that purports to be neutral and inclusive,” the petition submitted.

The petition argued that the new Regulations proceed on an untenable presumption that caste-based discrimination could operate only in one direction, foreclosing, as a matter of law, the possibility that persons belonging to general or upper castes may also be subjected to caste-based hostility, abuse, intimidation, or institutional prejudice.

“This presumption ignores the evolving social realities... The definition is manifestly arbitrary and violative of Article 14 of the Constitution...,” the petition said.

Not normal to tolerate Pakistan’s use of terror: India

Press Trust of India
UNITED NATIONS

Terrorism can never be normalised as Pakistan wishes to do, says Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish

In a strongly worded retort in the UNSC, India said it is not normal to tolerate Pakistan’s continued use of terrorism as an instrument of state policy, as New Delhi hit back at Islamabad’s envoy for advancing a “false and self-serving” account of Operation Sindoor.

India’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, delivered a sharp response to comments made by Pakistan’s Ambassador to the UN, Asim Iftikhar Ahmad.

Mr. Ahmad spoke about Operation Sindoor, Jammu and Kashmir and the Indus Waters Treaty in his remarks at the UN Security Council open debate on Monday on “Reaffirming international rule of law: pathways to reinvigorating peace, justice, and multilateralism”.

With Mr. Ahmad telling the Council that Pakistan’s response to Operation Sindoor “established that there can be no ‘new normal’ based on coercion or impunity”, Delhi slammed Islamabad, with Mr. Harish asserting that terrorism can never be normalised as Pakistan wishes to do.

CPI(M) slams India-EU FTA as ‘surrender of economic interests’

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) on Tuesday strongly opposed the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed earlier in the day, calling it a “wholesale surrender” of India’s economic interests. In a statement, the Polit Bureau said the agreement would damage key domestic industries and undermine the livelihoods of workers, farmers, and small producers.

According to the CPI(M), India has agreed to eliminate or sharply reduce tariffs on more than 90% of goods imported from the EU, including major cuts on automobiles (from 110% to 40%), iron and steel (22% to 0%), pharmaceuticals (11% to 0%), wines and spirits (150% to 40%), processed foods (50% to 0%), and sheep meat (33% to 0%). Such tariff reductions, the party argued, would adversely affect the automobile, pharmaceutical, machinery, and electrical sectors, with the EU projecting its exports to India to rise by over 107% in the coming years.

The party said the benefits such as cheaper cars and wines would accrue only to affluent consumers while the broader impact of increased imports would threaten employment and destabilise domestic manufacturing.

The CPI(M) also criticised the FTA’s alignment with the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), which designates Israel’s Haifa port as a key transit point. At a time when global calls are growing to sanction Israel over its actions in Gaza, the party said, the Indian government was “deepening ties” instead.

Cerebration Corporate Quiz 2026 invites participants for 22nd edition

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Hindu businessline Cerebration Corporate Quiz is back with its 22nd edition, inviting corporate executives, business professionals, B-school students and other bright minds to compete for the national title.

This year, the competition will follow a hybrid format. The ongoing online prelims are being held till January 29. Participants are required to answer 25 questions to qualify for the regional rounds. The regional finals will take place between January 31 and February 21 in Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Bengaluru, Delhi and Mumbai, with the top six finalists from each city competing in the national finale.

Participants stand a chance to win a grand prize of up to ₹1.5 lakh, with the winners from each regional round advancing to the national final to compete for the Cerebration title.

The quiz is presented by Title Partner JK Tyre, powered by IndianOil, in association with BSE and Central Bank of India, and with M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women, Chennai; Institute of Public Enterprise, Hyderabad; St. Teresa’s College, Ernakulam; Kristu Jayanti Deemed to be University, Bengaluru; and BIMTECH, Delhi as the Regional Venue Partners.

To register, visit the link *thbl.news/BLCQE* or scan the QR code.

Children among six missing after boat capsizes in Brahmaputra

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Six people, including children, have been reported missing after a motorised country boat capsized in the Brahmaputra river in western Assam’s Barpeta district on Tuesday. The district police said that the boat, sailing from Rohampur to Borghul, had 36 people aboard when tragedy struck.

This is the second motorised boat mishap in Assam in less than a year.

APPEAL

4 years old Sanjeev suffering from “B Cell - Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia”, has to undergo Chemotherapy and Radiation Therapy for 3 years at **Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai.** The total expenditure is **Rs. 8,00,000/-.** His father is working as a labourer and earns a meager income. Please help him to undergo the treatment as his family cannot afford this huge expenditure. Donations sent by Ch/D.D. favouring **Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged.** The donations sent through Ch/D.D/M.O/ NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/c No. 60182010063310, IFSC No: CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN’S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT. Your e-mail ID is requested.

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Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org.

WWS

At summit, EU asked India to put 'pressure' on Russia to end war, says Kaja Kallas

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Europe and India can build a partnership that is "predictable", Kaja Kallas, the foreign policy chief of the European Union, said on Tuesday, taking aim at the U.S., Russia, and China for increasing uncertainty in the world.

Ms. Kallas said that during the EU-India Summit on Tuesday between Prime Minister Narendra Modi, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and European Council President Antonio Costa, the EU had asked India to "put pressure" on Moscow to end the war in Ukraine.

Kaja Kallas

Speaking at a think-tank event here, shortly after the India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) and Strategic and Defence Partnership were announced, Ms. Kallas said the U.S. "tariff threats", China's "economic coercion", and the "existential threat" to Europe from Russia were all common challenges.

In September 2025, Ms. Kallas had said that India's participation in the Zapad military exercises and its imports of Russian oil "stand in the way of closer ties" between New Delhi and Brussels.

Accusing Russia of refusing to agree to a ceasefire with Ukraine and of bombing civilian targets, Ms. Kallas said that Moscow wanted to "push Ukrainian people to surrender".

"What we have asked our Indian colleagues is to put pressure on the Russians so that they would also want peace, because this war is not good for Europe or for the [Global South] and that is an area of convergence for EU and India is that we both want sustainable peace," she said, speaking at the Ananta Centre.

On Sunday, the Kremlin spokesperson had said that ceasefire talks in Abu Dhabi between Russia and Ukraine were under way, but European leaders, particularly Ms. Kallas, would not be included in the talks.

Calling for India and the EU to cooperate on the Indo-Pacific, the EU top diplomat criticised China's "weaponisation of trade" and highlighted the need for open sea lanes.

"[EU and India] both face economic coercive practices coming from China and to address this alone, we are both weak. But together we are much stronger [and can] stand up to this," Ms. Kallas said, adding that if companies were "hit" by Chinese practices, prosperity would also suffer, and the EU-India FTA would help the two countries cooperate against this, and shore up the multilateral world order.

Referring to President Donald Trump's imposition of new duties, without naming the U.S., she said the "constant threat of tariffs" and the reversal of signed agreements "by an executive order" had created pressure on companies around the world.

She stressed that India and the EU must "build confidence" and work on trade, security, defence and foreign policy together. "[EU members] take a long time to negotiate an agreement, but when we do, we stick to them and actually implement them," she said.

Ms. Kallas said it was time for India and the EU to cooperate on defence hardware as well.

Prime Minister lauds 'ambitious' trade deal with European Union

'Historic' FTA a boost to investment between India and the European Union, says Modi; pact brings together Indian services and skills with European capital and innovations, says EU chief; deal 'opens a whole new world', says Union Home Minister

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

India 'concluded' a 'historic' Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the European Union, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday, announcing the end of negotiations that began nearly two decades ago and were revived in 2022.

Speaking at the end of delegation-level talks with the visiting European leaders – European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa – Mr. Modi said that alongside the 'ambitious FTA', India was also entering into a new Security and Defence Partnership and a system of mobility that would allow secure and legal movement of Indians to the EU region.

Coming together: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, EU chief Ursula von der Leyen, and European Council President António Costa witness the exchange of an MoU in New Delhi on Tuesday. ANI

"Today, India has concluded the largest Free Trade Agreement in its history," said Mr. Modi. The two sides began discussions on the trade deal in 2007 but suspended the negotiation in 2013, and the talks were relaunched in 2022 as India and the EU began reorienting policies in the post-COVID-19 scenario. The Prime Minister presented the deal as a boost to investment between the EU and India that would support "innovation partnerships and strengthen supply chains at the global level".

The deal would "cut upto €4 billion in annual tariffs for exporters", Ms. von der Leyen said. "It brings together Indian skills, services and scale with Europe's technology, capital and innovation," she added.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah welcomed the FTA and said the deal "safeguards the related sectors" while "opening a whole new world of opportunities for textiles, apparel, leather footwear, marine products, gems, jewellery, handicrafts, engineering goods, medical instruments and appliances, plastics and automobile sectors."

Global uncertainties

Referring to global uncertainties, Mr. Modi said the two sides discussed the conflict in Ukraine, West Asia, and the Indo-Pacific theatre, saying: "In this context, the partnership between India and the European Union will strengthen stability within the international system."

A joint statement issued after the meeting said the two sides would "continue to support efforts towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine through dialogue and diplomacy, based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law, including independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity." It also called for "unhindered humanitarian access" for the victims of Israel-Palestine conflict in the Gaza Strip and called for implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2803 of November 17, 2025, that welcomes the 'Board of Peace' for Gaza. The document reiterated the call for "implementation of the two-state solution, through dialogue and diplomacy" for the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Elaborating on the India-EU Security and Defence Partnership, Mr. Modi said: "This will help us work more closely on counter-terrorism, maritime security, and cybersecurity."

The two sides welcomed the launch of talks on a 'Security of Information Agreement' to facilitate the exchange of classified information. Briefing the media about the discussion, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said India has defence and security partnerships with "several individual EU member states" already, but this framework agreement on security and defence would "allow Indian defence companies to benefit from opportunities arising from the EU's own very significant defence initiatives that are underway". The European Commission President described the defence and security framework as "a landmark departure and a trust-based platform".

Cong. to raise MGNREGA, SIR in Budget Session

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The replacement of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the special intensive revision of electoral rolls, additional tariffs over the purchase of Russian crude, and other key economic and foreign policy issues will be taken up by the Congress in the first part of the Budget Session of Parliament, which begins on Wednesday.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the party's parliamentary strategy group, held at the residence of Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and other leaders were present. Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor could not attend as he was returning from Dubai, and a source said he had informed the party of his absence in advance.

Briefing presspersons, Congress leader Naseer Hussain said leaders of Opposition parties would meet at 10 a.m. in Mr. Kharge's chamber in Parliament House on Wednesday to work out a joint strategy for the session.

"The biggest issue that has emerged is that of MGNREGA. We held a detailed discussion and will raise it during the first part of the session. Alongside, the issue of SIR would also be raised," he added.

Opposition, TDP seeks briefing on FTAs; parties for debate on job Act

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Several floor leaders from the Opposition and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), which is a key Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ally, on Tuesday urged the Centre to keep Parliament informed about the recently concluded Foreign Trade Agreements (FTAs), and ongoing negotiations with the United States. They made the demand at an all-party meeting chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh ahead of the Budget Session.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Congress leader Jairam Ramesh after the meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

India concluded negotiations with the European Union on Tuesday, and signed FTAs with the U.K., Singapore, and the UAE recently.

The TDP's Lok Sabha floor leader, Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu, told the meeting that given the shifting global economic landscape, particularly under the new tariff regime imposed by the U.S., it was essential for Parliament to be updated on the FTAs the government had negotiated. Mr. Devarayalu urged the government to bring legislation giving statutory backing to Amravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh. Such a Bill was likely to be brought during the Budget Session, sources indicated.

Multiple topics

Opposition leaders demanded a debate on India's foreign policy, flagging what they described as "repeated humiliation" in response to statements by U.S. President Donald Trump. They sought a "structured" debate on the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, and the rural employment legislation – the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act.

Several Opposition leaders, including John Brittas of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Kodikkunnil Suresh of the Congress, P. Sandosh Kumar of the Communist Party of India, Ram Gopal Yadav of the Samajwadi Party, and Sanjay Singh of the Aam Aadmi Party, asked the government to explain its response to comments made by Mr. Trump.

They questioned India's "silence" regarding global conflicts, including issues related to Venezuela, the Israel-Palestine conflict, and the U.S.'s purported claim over Greenland.

Orderly conduct

However, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju ruled out debates on the SIR and the VB-G Ram G Act. "Once a law is before the nation, we have to follow it. We cannot reverse the gear," he said. The issues could be raised during debates on the President's Address and the Budget, he said.

The Congress's Chief Whip in the Rajya Sabha, Jairam Ramesh, and Mr. Brittas objected to the non-circulation of government business for the session. Mr. Rijiju said the list would be shared in due course. Running the House smoothly, he said, remained the government's priority. Mr. Rijiju appealed for orderly conduct. "My sincere appeal is that while exercising our right to speak, we must also have the duty to listen to other honourable members," the Minister said.

EU, India to collaborate on 'peaceful uses' of nuclear energy under Euratom deal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The European Union (EU) and India have committed to promoting collaboration on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the India-Euratom agreement, according to a statement from the Joint India-European Union Comprehensive Strategic Agenda on Tuesday. India and the EU had signed a research and development agreement on peaceful uses of nuclear energy with Euratom, Europe's atomic energy body, in July 2020.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal and NSA Ajit Doval with delegates from the European Union in New Delhi on Tuesday. AP

The statement on Tuesday highlighted collaboration on research and development activities in nuclear science and technology, advanced materials for detectors, radiation safety, nuclear security, non-power applications of atomic energy, including cooperation on radio-pharmaceuticals, and strengthening cooperation in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER). It also spoke of "deepening cooperation" under the EU research and innovation programme, Horizon Europe, including in the fields of energy, water, agri food, health, semiconductors, biotech, advanced materials, particularly through mechanisms such as co-funding and coordinated calls. Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research.

While specifics are unclear, one of the major sticking points involving the EU and India was the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which imposed additional tariffs on iron and steel producers, outside the EU, who emit more carbon emissions in the production of iron and steel than European producers.

"Through CBAM provisions, commitments have been secured, including a forward-looking, most-favoured nation assurance, extending flexibilities, if any, granted to third countries under the regulation," India's Press Information Bureau said in a statement.

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INBRIEF

60 stranded people, including troops, rescued in Jammu

Heavy and continuing snowfall left the Kashmir Valley cut off, with most roads and all air traffic closed on Tuesday. The snow and transport chaos had left at least 60 people, including 40 security personnel, stranded in Doda, Jammu. They were rescued by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO). "The rescue began on January 24, a day after heavy snowfall, which continued for nearly 40 hours, left approximately 38 km of road under five to six feet of snow. The route was opened by January 25 evening, enabling safe evacuation of 20 stranded civilians and 40 personnel of the 4 Rashtriya Rifles (RR)," the spokesman said.

196 contacts linked to Nipah cases found negative in W.B.

As per reports received from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), only two confirmed cases of Nipah virus disease have been reported from West Bengal from December 2025 till date, said a release issued by the Health Ministry on Tuesday. Following confirmation of these two cases, the Central government, in coordination with the government of West Bengal, initiated comprehensive public health measures in accordance with established protocols. A total of 196 contacts linked to the confirmed cases have been identified, traced, monitored, and tested. All traced contacts have tested negative and are asymptomatic for the Nipah virus disease.

NEET PG vacancies highest in Maharashtra, Karnataka, T.N.

Based on data from the Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) for the 2025-26 academic session, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu have the highest number of vacant seats under the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Postgraduate) or NEET PG 2025-26 across the country. All three States have more than 2,000 vacant seats each under the private, management and NRI quotas. Subjects with the maximum number of vacant seats include microbiology, pathology, biochemistry, and pharmacology. Specialities such as general medicine, radio diagnosis, general surgery, and dermatology continue to be the most sought after.

Officials cannot seek 'identity proof' from seers: Uma Bharti

Uma Bharti, senior BJP leader and former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, came out in support of Swami Avimukteshwaranand, stating that government officials could not demand "identity proof" from seers. "I believe that a positive resolution will emerge between Swami Avimukteshwaranand Ji Maharaj and the Uttar Pradesh government, but the administrative authorities demanding proof of his status as Shankaracharya is a violation by the administration of its own limits and authority; this right belongs solely to the Shankaracharyas and the council of scholars," Ms. Bharti wrote on social media platform X.

Acquire, auction assets of acid attackers to pay victims, says SC

The CJI says that acid attacks should result in extraordinary punitive measures beyond the letters of the law; the court assures the petitioner best legal representation for her case; it asks the Centre to consider 'legislative interventions'

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday recommended that the assets of people found guilty of carrying out acid attacks should be seized and auctioned to compensate their victims, both as a punishment and a measure of deterrence.

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, heading a Bench, said the crime of acid attacks should result in "extraordinary punitive measures which are beyond the letters of the law".

The top court said adopting a "reformative approach has no place for acid attackers". Counsel submitted that the attackers too may be hailing from the "lowest" strata of society with hardly any assets in their name.

Deterrent needed

"If a person is found guilty of acid attack, why should all his assets not be acquired and auctioned in a transparent manner to compensate the victim. The police should probe his assets, to whom they belong, etc, and submit the details along with the chargesheet in court, which should order an embargo on creating third party rights on these assets," Chief Justice Kant observed.

Chief Justice Kant said the state action should be extremely painful for the those convicted of the crime. Otherwise, punishment would not act as a deterrent against future attacks, especially on young women and children, he said.

The court was hearing a petition filed by acid attack survivor and activist Shaheen Malik, who said the pain caused when acid consumed one's life and identity was "unbelievably traumatic".

"The pain is so bad, so bad, that even I cannot express it. I had 25 surgeries. The mental and physical pain is extreme. One loses a sense of identity. I have sight in at least one eye. There are many women out there who are completely blind and who have not got any help from the State," Ms. Malik said.

> The state action should be extremely painful for the accused; otherwise, punishment would not act as a deterrent against future attacks, especially on young women and children
>
> **SURYA KANT**
> Chief Justice of India

She informed the court that her alleged attackers had recently been acquitted by the trial court.

16 years of ordeal

"I fought the case for 16 years. I lost. I am filing an appeal against the verdict in the High Court. Can you please tell the High Court to expedite the hearing, so that I don't have to wait another 16 years. They attacked me when I was in my 20s, now I am 42. I lost the best years of my life fighting the case," Ms. Malik addressed the Bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi.

Chief Justice Kant asked her to give a list of four or five lawyers she considered good, so that the top court could appoint them as her legal aid counsel in the High Court.

"We will see that you get the best legal representation," Chief Justice Kant assured Ms. Malik.

The court asked the Centre, represented by Additional Solicitor-General Archana Pathak Dave, to consider "legislative interventions" on behalf of acid attack survivors.

"This crime should not be seen as any less than dowry death. There should be a shifting of onus onto the accused. Again, why should this crime be part of the general sentencing policy? Why don't you consider carving out an exception?" Chief Justice Kant asked the Centre's law officer. The Bench directed States to furnish a list of the incidents of acid attacks reported yearly, the number of chargesheets filed, cases decided, pending appeals, brief particulars of each victim, their academic qualifications, current employment and marital status, medical treatment, and details of expenses incurred or committed by the State rehabilitation scheme for victims of acid attack, if any. It also sought details separately of victims who were forcibly made to ingest acid.

The court asked the States to provide details of any special scheme run by them for survivors.

Reports from 15 High Courts submitted in the top court showed that the highest number of pending cases of acid attacks were in Uttar Pradesh at 198, followed by 160 in West Bengal, 114 in Gujarat, 68 in Bihar, and 58 in Maharashtra.

SC declines plea against 'VIP darshan' in temple

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to hear a petition challenging the practice of 'VIP darshan' at the famed Shri Mahakaleshwar temple in Ujjain, observing that the court is not meant to play the role of a gatekeeper on who enters a temple and when.

"In the presence of Mahakal (the deity), nobody is a VIP," Chief Justice of India Surya Kant addressed advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, counsel for the petitioner, Darpan Awasthi.

Mr. Jain argued that there ought to be a uniform policy, especially about entering the *garbh graha* (*sanctum sanctorum*). "The court is not the one to decide on this. Courts cannot start to decide who should be allowed or not and when they should be allowed," Chief Justice Kant responded.

Mr. Awasthi had challenged a Madhya Pradesh High Court order dismissing his petition against the preferential treatment given to VIPs to enter the *sanctum* to offer water to the deity, while denying access to the general public.

'BJP violated Constitutional protocol by insulting LoPs'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Tuesday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of violating Constitutional protocol in regard to the treatment of the Leaders of the Opposition (LoPs) during Republic Day and called it a warning sign for democracy.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said on Republic Day itself, the BJP "chose to destroy the ethos of a Republic and acted on the whim of their Supreme Leader".

"...Hon'ble Mallikarjun @kharge *ji* and Sh. @RahulGandhi *ji* enjoy Cabinet rank by virtue of their posts, yet were relegated to the back rows during the Republic Day event. This has shown the PM's political immaturity to the entire world – how he chose to violate Constitutional norms because of his petty political outlook," he said.

Ahead of Union Budget, Congress questions credibility of official data

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

On the eve of the Budget session of Parliament, the Congress on Tuesday questioned the credibility of official economic data, alleging that inequality was widening even as welfare measures were being rolled back.

The party released its annual report "Inequality on the rise, welfare in retreat – real state of the economy, 2026", days before the tabling of the Economic Survey and the presentation of the Union Budget.

The Congress said the exercise was aimed at placing "facts" before the public ahead of what it described as a government-driven "propaganda" push through the President's Address, the Economic Survey and the Budget.

"It [the report] correctly identifies the key challenges to the Indian economy stemming from 'K-shaped' unequal growth, inadequate and low-quality job-creation, erosion of social security nets, and the under-investment in basic public services of clean air, water, and healthcare," Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh said.

Rajeev Gowda

Releasing the report along with party colleague Amitabh Dubey, All India Congress Committee (AICC) Research Department chairman Rajeev Gowda questioned whether the Narendra Modi government's economic numbers could be trusted. "The IMF gave India's statistics a C grade. 0.5% inflation rate is not the reality of people's lives. Former Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian calculates that GDP figures are at least 2.5% higher than actual reality," Mr. Gowda said.

He pointed out that in 2024, the government's production-side GDP estimate showed growth of 9.2%, which was 47% higher than the 4.9% growth indicated by the expenditure-side GDP metric. "In the first half of 2025-26, manufacturing reportedly grew at 8.4%. But the Index of Eight Core Industries showed only 2.9% growth," he said.

On rupee depreciation

Mr. Gowda criticised the government over the depreciation of the rupee, stating that it had emerged as Asia's worst-performing currency in 2025. "In four of 10 months of 2025, net FDI was negative. More investors withdrew money and more Indian money was invested abroad compared to foreign investments into India," he said.

Highlighting employment trends, he said the share of workers in manufacturing declined from 12.1% in 2017-18 to 11.4% in 2023-24. "What happened to Make in India? Agriculture's share rose from 44.1% to 46.1%... Job growth is concentrated in low value, informal, and gig economy," Mr. Gowda said.

Flagging what he described as "rising inequality", the Congress leader said the top 10% accounted for 58% of national income, while the bottom half received only 15%. He claimed that four of five Indians subsisted on less than ₹200 per day, while one-third lived on less than ₹100 a day.

"Net household financial savings are at a five-decade low of 5.2%, household debt is sharply up to 41% from 35% in 2019," he said.

Death toll in Kolkata fire rises to eight; 18 still missing

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The death toll in the Anandapur warehouse fire in Kolkata rose to eight on Tuesday. Senior officials of the West Bengal Department of Fire and Emergency Services said a fire clearance certificate had not been obtained by the warehouse. About 18 people are still missing.

"There was no fire clearance, [of] that we are certain. Rest will be found in further investigation. We will definitely file FIRs (first information reports) because there were violations," Ranvir Kumar, Director-General, West Bengal Department of Fire and Emergency Services, told mediapersons on Tuesday at the site of the tragedy.

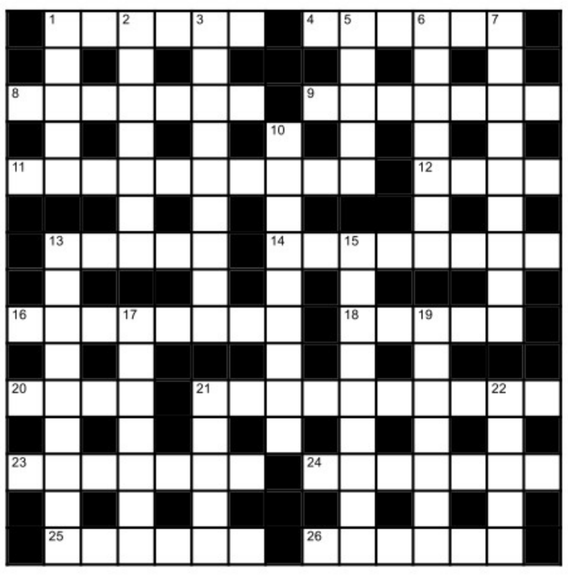
The charred bodies are yet to be identified. Family members of the deceased and missing people gathered at the site.

TH CROSSWORD + 14702

(Set by Afterdark)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Thrissur taxicab carrying extra liability (6)
4 Second coffee's early essentially (6)
8 Two characters swap places in military wedding (7)
9 Show bearcat's movement (7)
11 From Paris; free to consult (10)
12 Tree's leaves given to Kelvin (4)
13 Situation worries public, people beaten, rise in the end (5)
14 Without monitors, last period was arranged on celestial object (8)
16 Fancy composition by fine worker at East perhaps (8)
18 Topless model is substantial (5)
20 Grow back (4)
21 Trouble on joint for dressmaker (10)
23 Arranged medical units of ten (7)
24 Native extremist (7)
25 View map (6)
26 Tease in X backed by timeline with energy (6)

Down

1 Disgrace for impostor having ecstasy (5)
2 Rope used in ship's latrine is frayed (7)
3 Intrusion of spies from the east, seen as trouble on understanding (9)
5 Monkey goes over current fast (5)
6 Art director leaves Cred, ill-treated as deserter (7)
7 Soldiers' old lover's a source to question again (2-7)
10 Indian king to open meat counter across a highway corner (9)
13 Irregular sleep has troubled son (9)
15 Sexually ambiguous person deceased in shift (9)
17 After leaving electric vehicle, retriever ran to another dog (7)
19 Last exercise with policeman's on street (7)
21 Order cold beer after some starter (5)
22 Carve up small rabbit (5)

SUDOKU

			5	6				1
		1				8	6	
							5	
1					3		2	4
6	4			9			3	7
7	3		4					8
	9							
	7	6				3		
3				4	8			

No.SS6774 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

2	1	6	3	8	9	7	4	5
3	5	7	2	4	6	9	1	8
8	4	9	7	1	5	3	2	6
5	7	4	1	9	2	8	6	3
1	3	8	6	5	4	2	9	7
9	6	2	8	7	3	4	5	1
6	8	3	9	2	1	5	7	4
4	2	1	5	3	7	6	8	9
7	9	5	4	6	8	1	3	2

FAITH

Muruga saves His bhaktas

A vehicle travelling towards a destination can be delayed for any number of reasons. But there is one *vahana*, which always arrives on time. That ever-punctual *vahana* is the black buffalo which serves as Yama's mount, said So.So. Meenakshisundaram in a discourse. If Yama arrives to take a person's atma, then the atma is sure to go to Yama loka. Arunagirinatha prays to Lord Muruga to save him from this fate. If Muruga takes an atma, He escorts it to Siva loka. So Arunagirinatha prays that before Yama comes at the appointed hour, Lord Muruga should come on His peacock, to take charge of Arunagirinatha's soul. Once Muruga arrives, Yama will not dare approach His bhaktas.

In Kandar Anubhuti, verse 10, Arunagirinatha refers to the asura Vala, who was the enemy of Indra. Vala had a boon from Lord Siva, because of which his body parts would turn to gems when he died. A fight broke out between Vala and Indra, and Indra killed Vala. Indra had another enemy Soorapadman. When Sooran came in the form of a mango tree, Muruga threw His spear at him, and the tree was split into two. One half turned into a rooster, which became Muruga's flag. The other half turned into a peacock, which became Muruga's mount. Even in recent times, we have seen how Muruga saved a noble soul. Kripanandavariar, the great Muruga bhakta, was travelling from Mumbai to Chennai by flight. From the plane he saw the Tiruttani hill. He said, "Muruga is always with His devotees." And those were his last words. When the time came for him to depart from this world, the Lord of Tiruttani gave darshan to him. His lifeless body returned to Chennai, while his atma was taken away by Muruga.

INBRIEF

Hindalco unveils $2.3-billion aluminium smelter in Odisha

Hindalco Industries on Tuesday announced a ₹210 billion ($2.29 billion) project to expand its aluminium smelter in Odisha, as a part of its larger capacity enhancement plan aimed at reducing reliance on imports. The company also commissioned a flat rolled products (FRP) and battery-grade aluminium foil manufacturing facility worth ₹45 billion. Aluminium products are critical raw materials for lithium-ion batteries used in EVs and clean energy storage. REUTERS

Asian Paints Q3 net profit declines 5.2% to ₹1,045 crore

Asian Paints Q3 consolidated profit attributable to owners declined 5.2% to ₹1,045.6 crore as against the third quarter of the previous fiscal, when the company reported a PAT of ₹1,103.5 crore. Revenue from operations increased 3.85% to ₹8,819.72 crore as against ₹8,521.51 crore in the year-ago period. The implementation of the new labour code had incurred the company a one-time expense of ₹74.5 crore on increase in gratuity and compensation on paid leaves.

Tata Consumer Q3 net profit rises 38% to ₹385 crore

Tata Consumer Products Ltd.'s net profit attributable to owners increased 38% to ₹384.6 crore on an increase in revenue from operations in the December 2025 quarter, as against ₹279 crore in the year-ago period. Revenue from operations increased 15% to ₹5,112 crore in the reporting quarter as against ₹4,443.6 crore in the corresponding period of previous fiscal. The company reported revenue increased 13% in India business and 11% in international business.

'FTA will anchor manufacturers into global value chain'

Global trade engagement will deepen partnership between the 2 major economies that together account for nearly 25% of the global GDP: CII

The Hindu Bureau
COIMBATORE

Fair trade: Zero-duty access in textiles and clothing covering all tariff lines to open up the EU's $263.5 bn import market. AFP

Business leaders and industry associations have welcomed the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA), expressing confidence that the pact would benefit Indian consumers and industries.

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII said the FTA represented a strategic breakthrough in India's global trade engagement and deepened the partnership between two major democracies and economies that together accounted for nearly 25% of the global GDP.

The proposed phased reduction of tariffs on cars and auto components after the conclusion of India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) has the potential to foster technological innovation and sustainable growth within the Indian automotive sector, particularly in future mobility, said Hardeep Singh Brar, President and CEO of the BMW Group India.

Santosh Iyer, MD and CEO of Mercedes-Benz India said, "A gradual tariff reduction on vehicles and fully liberalised automotive parts are strategically important decisions in the FTA for the automotive industry."

Balbir Singh Dhillon, Brand Director, Audi India, said the "constructive" approach to trade can support the broader automotive ecosystem.

The Union Textile Ministry said zero duty access in textiles and clothing covering all tariff lines will open up the EU's $263.5 billion import market. Such access will expand opportunities, particularly in yarn, MMF apparel, home textiles and readymade garments.

The Texprocil and the Apparel Export Promotion Council said the India-EU FTA and those with the U.K. and EFTA open up the entire European market for Indian exporters.

Indian apparel exports can grow 20-25% year-on-year as against the current growth rate of 3.01% in the EU market.

"Services are fast growing in both economies and the gains will be in the form of better EU market access for Indian tech. Indian Information Technology firms stand to gain from greater opportunities in Europe, including easier cross-border provision of services and potentially improved mobility for professionals," said India's tech apex body Nasscom. Given the geopolitical challenges, the FTA diversifies markets for Indian IT exporters, it said.

For the pharmaceutical sector, Namit Joshi, chairman of Pharmexcil, said the FTA delivers structural competitiveness.

Near-zero tariff access strengthens the position of Indian formulations, APIs, and value-added medicines in the EU. This is consequential for India's pharma MSMEs.

The agreement also enables stable, long-term, and predictable pharmaceutical trade, benefiting European healthcare systems and consumers, he said.

Oil and gas sector eyeing $100 bn in investments, says PM

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Narendra Modi

India's oil and gas sector is eyeing to scale $100 billion in investments by the end of the current decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the inauguration of the India Energy Week in Goa on Tuesday. He said India aspires to expand the exploration acreage to 1 million sq. km.

"It is with this thought that more than 170 [exploration] blocks have been awarded [in the past], he said, adding, "Andaman Nicobar basin is becoming our next hydrocarbon hope."

Mr. Modi also said that companies investing in India's exploration space could be assured of acquiring a profit. The PM also said that the energy sector was at "the epicenter of our [the country's] aspirations". He stated there was potential for $500 billion worth investment opportunities in the sector. "Therefore, I call upon you to make in India, innovate in India, scale in India and invest in India," he stated.

The India Energy Week, being held in Goa this year, is the flagship conference of the country's oil and gas sector, collaborating stakeholders from both India and outside, for agreements and consultations.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and Managing Director and CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), estimated that the global oil demand would remain above 100 million barrels per day till 2040. He added that demand for both liquefied natural gas (LNG) and electricity would increase by 50% each. He added that an additional component to the energy demand dynamics would emerge from air-conditioners. By 2050, the world will have 5.6 billion air conditioners, up from 1.6 billion today. "That is, 10 new units sold every second for the next 30 years," he observed.

"Demand at this scale and pace requires investment in all forms of energy. The biggest risk is not oversupply, it is under investment," Mr. Jaber said.

"What we are really seeing play out [today] is energy addition," he added.

Later in the day, Mr. Puri informed that India and Canada had launched a renewed ministerial energy dialogue. An official statement from the Canadian Government said the two countries have "significant potential to emerge strong collaborators in area of energy fuels".

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	TUESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	81,857	0.39
US Dollar	91.68	0.23
Gold	1,66,000	4.59
Brent oil	66.71	—

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	1959.50	95.30
Adani Ports	1363.90	55.50
Apollo Hosp	6793.50	-9.50
Asian Paints	2622.80	-80.90
Axis Bank	1315.80	57.80
Bajaj Auto	9492.00	78.50
Bajaj Finserv	1917.70	-31.30
Bajaj Finance	914.70	-13.15
Bharat Elec	415.95	5.25
Bharti Airtel	1973.40	-11.30
Cipla	1313.00	-2.00
Coal India	422.90	4.50
Dr Reddys Lab	1239.80	4.20
Hindustan Unilever	40.20	DE*
Eicher Motors	7164.50	191.50
Eternal Ltd.	253.85	-4.85
Grasim Ind	2856.20	97.20
HCL Tech	1720.20	13.20
HDFC Bank	926.40	10.30
HDFC Life	720.05	7.95
Hindalco	961.85	11.55
Hind Unilever	2400.90	-8.60
ICICI Bank	1361.40	18.00
IntGlobeAvi	4769.00	64.50
Infosys	1682.70	11.90
ITC	318.65	-4.75
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	256.05	3.15
JSW Steel	1222.00	52.00
Kotak Bank	408.70	-14.10
L&T	3787.80	44.00
M&M	3393.50	-149.90
Maruti Suzuki	15245.00	-224.00
Max Healthcare	975.50	-15.90
NestleIndia	1303.30	9.50
NTPC	344.70	8.00
ONGC	247.95	2.48
PowerGrid Corp	254.35	0.20
Reliance Ind	1380.50	-5.60
SBI Life	2038.20	35.60
State Bank	1053.15	23.65
Shriram Finance Ltd.	1001.05	-2.50
Sun Pharma	1638.90	7.00
TataConsumerProduct	1187.40	33.90
Tata Steel	192.28	4.67
TCS	3158.00	-4.50
Tech Mahindra	1745.10	44.00
Titan	3997.00	-24.80
Tata Motors PV	340.55	-3.90
Trent Ltd.	3795.10	39.20
UltraTech Cement	12589.00	220.00
Wipro	234.80	-3.60

DE: Demerged Entity

Vedanta to sell 1.59% stake

Vedanta said on Tuesday it will sell up to a 1.59% stake in its unit Hindustan Zinc, worth about ₹45.9 billion ($500.8 million), based on *Reuters* calculations.

Our hybrid technology could be the surprise of the market: Renault CEO

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

India calling: Fabrice Cambolive (left) and Stephane Deblaise, CEO, Renault Group India. BIJOY GHOSH

Having unveiled the new Duster SUV in three powertrains, including a hybrid, French carmaker Renault, which for two decades remained a significantly marginal player in India, but is now banking on it's hybrid technology to achieve 3% to 5% of market share in India by 2030, it's global CEO said in an interview.

"The changes in terms of growth in the Indian market in the last five years are huge. We are seeing India is better than Germany. It was a question five years ago. Now, India is almost doubling the level of the market of Germany viz. 2.8 [million] versus 4.5 [million]. Also, India has made huge progress in connectivity in terms of perceived quality," said Fabrice Cambolive, chief growth officer, Renault Group & CEO Renault brand.

He said, Renault in India, is attempting multiple engine technologies, despite which, the firm has become competitive, even while much has changed.

Soul in India

"Renault has a kind of soul here in India, because we, like India, are bold to be a pioneer on opening new segments like we did in the past. And with this boldness, you will see in the number of models we will announce now, but also in the technology we are betting - hybrid, which for me, could be one of the surprises of the market in the coming years," he said.

He said for Renault, Brazil and India are the markets where potential for growth is most important.

"India, now with the new free trade agreement (FTA), we have to analyse the numbers. The FTA is a very strategic move, which could lead us to consider India as one of our best growth potential markets outside Europe."

"For me, this FTA is important. Firstly, the political side. Second, the capacity to share technology between Europe and India. And third, to add new potential for exports.

Embraer-Adani sign MoU on aircraft manufacturing

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The partnership aims at establishing the country's first final assembly line for a commercial aircraft

Brazilian aerospace manufacturer Embraer signed an MoU with Adani Aerospace and Defence to explore aircraft manufacturing, including a potential final assembly line, alongside an aviation ecosystem that includes MRO and pilot training.

The partnership aims at establishing the country's first final assembly line for a commercial aircraft, followed by a phased increase in indigenisation, according to a joint statement.

However, no timelines or locations for the proposed facilities have been disclosed.

"Together, we will evaluate the most viable, advanced and efficient solutions in support of India's RTA (regional transport aircraft) ambitions and potential for implementation," said Arjan Meijer, president-CEO, Embraer Commercial Aviation.

Schemes such as UDAN that connect tier-2 and tier-3 cities have made the need for an indigenous regional aviation ecosystem critical, said Jeet Adani, director, Adani Defence & Aerospace, on the MoU.

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH
TENDER NOTICE
Sealed tenders are invited from the manufacturers or their sole authorized distributors/sole agents on the prescribed form for below mention items for two years.

Sr. No.	Name of Drug/Material	Due Date	Opening Date
1.	Inj. Remifentanyl 1mg/vial & 2mg/vial	19.02.2026 upto 12:30 PM	19.02.2026 at 02:00 PM

The tender will be opened at Committee Room attached to the office of Medical Superintendent, Nehru Hospital, PGIMER Chandigarh. Details of Tender Notice & Tender Form are available at our website **pgimer.edu.in & eprocure.gov.in**
PGI/RC/Advt./2026/HR-0051 — Officer In-charge(HPD), Proc. Drugs & Dressing

Rajasthan State Road Development And Construction Corporation Ltd., JAIPUR
No. : NIT/2025-26/33797 - 810 — **निविदा सूचना/2025-26** — Date : 27/01/2026
निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए केन्द्र / राज्य सरकार के अभिप्राप्तिकी विभागों एवं उनके अधिकृत संगठनों में पंजीकृत एवं अनुभवी संवेदकों से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्योरमेन्ट प्रक्रिया हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है

कार्य का विवरण	कार्य की कुल अनुमानित लागत(रु.)	निविदा सूचना संख्या
Construction of New VC Secretariate and Admn. Cell in VMOU Kota. UBN: RRC2526WSOB01122	361.11 Lakh	अल्पकालीन 639/25-26
Electrical work at Nursing College and Hostel at Nimbahera, Chittorgarh. UBN: RRC2526WSOB01134	201.00 Lakh	642/25-26
HT/LT Line Shifting work from Bandh Baretha to Uchain via Kheriya Mod. UBN: RRC2526WSOB01135	334.54 Lakh	
Construction of Major Bridge & Bypass at Sewla Village on Bandh Baretha to Uchain via Kheriya Mod Road. UBN: RRC2526WLOB01141	2089.39 Lakh	अल्पकालीन 647/25-26

निविदा से सम्बन्धित प्रपत्र में निविदा शुल्क, धरोहर राशि, डाउनलोड करने व खोलने की तारीख सहित सम्पूर्ण विवरण एवं संशोधन वेबसाईट: **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.nic.in** तथा **http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in/rsrdc** पर देखा जा सकता है। इच्छुक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेबसाईट **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** पर रजिस्टर्ड करवाना आवश्यक है। महाप्रबंधक

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
O/o THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (H-CITI & SNDP), SRCGKS, GHMC, Hyderabad
Tender Notice No. 17/SE(H-CITI & SNDP)/SRCGKS/GHMC/2025-26, Dt: 27.01.2026

Item No.:	Name of Work	Estimate Amount
1.	"a) Construction of left Arm Down Ramp for the Existing Owaisi Flyover towards Santhosh Nagar, b) Construction of 6 Lane Bi-Directional Grade Separator from Hafeez Baba Nagar Junction to 100 Feet Balapur-Chruch Road Junction. (Orner Hotel to Shoiab Hotel via Metro function Hall & c) Construction of 6 Lane Bi-Directional Flyover at Bandlaguda - Errakunta Cross Road Junction"	Rs. 385.00 Crores
	Total	Rs. 385.00 Crores

S.No.	Events	Date & Time
1.	Start date	03-02-2026 from 03.00 PM
2.	Pre-Bid Meeting	12-02-2026 at 03.00 PM Location: O/o Chief Engineer (H-CITI, Designs & Admin), GHMC 6th Floor, GHMC Head Office Tank Bund, Hyderabad
3.	Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids	20-02-2026 upto 03.00 PM
4.	Opening of Technical bid	20-02-2026 after 03.30 PM
5.	Opening of Price bid	21-02-2026 after 04.00 PM

Note: The Bidders are advised to visit www.tender.telangana.gov.in to download Bid Document and EPC project Tender Drawings. Any Queries can be addressed to sep2szghmc@gmail.com
Address of the officer concerned Sri. B.L.Srinivas Rao, SE (H-CITI&SNDP), SRCGKS, GHMC Phone. No. 9154768808. Superintending Engineer (H-CITI&SNDP), SRCGKS, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Tank Bund Road, Hyderabad. Further details can be seen at 'e' Procurement **https://tender.telangana.gov.in.** Sd/- **Superintending Engineer, (H-CITI & SNDP), SRCGKS, GHMC**
DIPR R.O.No.14573-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26 Dt. 27.01.2026

Bank staff strike for five-day work week hits operations

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Bank employees shout slogans amid nationwide strike.

Banking operations, especially those accessed through branches, on Tuesday were impacted as public sector bank employees and officers across the country went on a one-day strike called by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) demanding the government implement five-day work week.

Besides amplifying the demand, the strike called by the umbrella body of nine bank employees and officers unions also helped put up a show of solidarity.

A meeting of the UFBU is slated next month to chalk out the next course, a constituent bank employees union leader in Hyderabad said, declaring the strike as total.

Employees of regional rural banks, besides those of public sector banks, actively participated in the protest. Branches, however, were open as the government instructed managements accordingly and told them to requisition police assistance if need be, he said, pointing out in some banks, officers above chief managers' rank were not part of the unions.

For customers, the strike meant bank branches closed for four days since January 24 – fourth Saturday, Sunday and Republic Day. On account of strike, cash deposits, withdrawals, cheque clea rances and various work wee hit. But, availability of alternative channels such as ATMs and INB helped.

AI unveils interiors of Boeing 787-9 aircraft

Murali N. Krishnaswamy
HYDERABAD

Campbell Wilson

Air India unveiled the interiors of its first line-fit Boeing 787-9 (VT-AWA) on Tuesday. The day also marks exactly four years since the Tata Group officially reacquired the airline from the Government of India, in 2022.

The aircraft, which was flown from Delhi to Begumpet, will be a part of the aircraft display at Wings India 2026 here.

Speaking to the media, the airline's CEO, Campbell Wilson, said that the new aircraft is a part of the 470-aircraft order that was signed three years ago. The new cabin interiors will now be standard across the airline's 787 fleet. This includes the airline's legacy fleet of Boeing 787-8 aircraft which were acquired when Air India was a government enterprise.

(The writer is at Wings India 2026 at the invitation of Air India)

CG Power Q3 net rises 19% to ₹284 crore on revenue

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

CG Power and Industrial Solutions posted a 19% rise in consolidated net profit to ₹284 crore in the December quarter, mainly on the back of higher revenue.

Consolidated net profit was ₹238 crore.

Total sales rose to ₹3,175 crore during the quarter from ₹2,516 crore in the year-earlier period.

The board approved the payment of interim dividend at ₹1.30 per equity share i.e. 65% on face value of ₹2 per share for the 2025-26 financial year.

FLUID CONTROL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
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TENDER NOTICE
Ref: PUR/FCRI/CIVIL/25101/25140/2025-26 — Date:27.01.2026
Sealed competitive quotations in two bid system are invited from reputed, financially and technically capable Construction Firms/ Contractors from the approved list of CPWD, Railways, MES, State PWD, Govt. undertakings for the proposed construction projects as mentioned below :

1 | Tender No: PUR/FCRI/CIVIL/HPHTFT-ROAD/25101/2025-26

Name of work:	Formation and Concrete of proposed Road for HPHTFT Facility
Approximate Cost (PAC)(Rs.):	38.00 Lakhs (Including GST)
Bid Security EMD (Rs.):	40,000/-
Tender Fee (Rs.):	472/- including GST@18% (By NEFT / RTGS)
Time of completion:	4 Months from issue of Work Order

2 | Tender No: PUR/FCRI/CIVIL/VES-ROAD/25140/2025-26

Name of work:	Construction of Road, Drainage & Retaining Wall and related land development of VES Test Facility
Approximate Cost (PAC)(Rs.):	38.50 Lakhs (Including GST)
Bid Security EMD (Rs.):	40,000/-
Tender Fee (Rs.):	472/- including GST @18% (By NEFT / RTGS)
Time of completion:	4 Months from issue of Work Order

Last date of submission of Tender: 5.00 PM on 06.02.2026.
Date, Time & Place of issue of Tender Document: From 10.01.2026 to 06.02.2026 on any working day (Monday to Friday) from Logistics Department, FCRI. The Tender Document can be downloaded from the Website: **www.fcriindia.com/tender/** also.
FCRI reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
Note: Corrigendum/Amendment, if any would be hosted on the Institute website Tender page only. Hence prospective applicants are advised to visit FCRI website regularly for above purpose.
Sd/- DIRECTOR

BRUSSELS

‘Keep dreaming’: Rutte says Europe can’t defend itself without the U.S.

REUTERS

NATO chief Mark Rutte warned on Monday Europe cannot defend itself without the United States, in the face of calls for the continent to stand on its own feet after tensions over Greenland. “If anyone thinks here again, that the Europe can defend itself without the US — keep on dreaming. You can’t,” Mr. Rutte told lawmakers. AFP

CAIRO

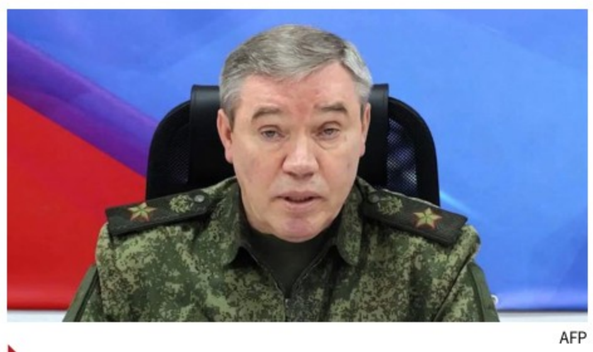
‘Hamas seeks role for its police in Gaza ahead of disarmament talks’

AFP

Hamas is seeking to incorporate its 10,000 police officers into a new U.S.-backed Palestinian administration for Gaza, sources said. The 20-point plan to end the war, now in its second phase, calls for the governance of Gaza to be handed to the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, a Palestinian technocratic body. REUTERS

MOSCOW

Russia’s military chief visits troops in east Ukraine: Defence Ministry



AFP

The Russian army’s chief of staff, Valery Gerasimov, has visited troops fighting in eastern Ukraine, Russia’s Defence Ministry said on Tuesday. Gen. Gerasimov “inspected the progress of combat missions conducted by formations and units of the Zapad (West) force group,” the Ministry wrote on Telegram. AFP

LOS ANGELES

TikTok settles lawsuit on social media addiction hours before trial

AFP

Video sharing app TikTok has made an eleventh-hour deal to avoid a landmark U.S. trial accusing it, along with Meta and YouTube, of addicting young people to social media, lawyers said on Tuesday. The deal was made as jury selection was to begin in a Los Angeles court that could establish a legal precedent. AFP

Trump says Iran wants talks as U.S. strike group arrives in West Asia

President states the U.S. has a ‘big armada’ near Iran, larger than the one used against Venezuela; U.S. intelligence reports say Iran govt.’s position is weakening; Senator Lindsey Graham urges Republican President to end Iranian regime after talks

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

A U.S. naval strike force led by an aircraft carrier was in West Asian waters on Tuesday as Iran vowed to hit back against any strike and President Donald Trump said he believed the Islamic republic still wanted talks.

Washington has not ruled out new military intervention against Tehran over its crackdown on protests, which according to rights groups saw thousands of people killed within days.

A strike group led by the *USS Abraham Lincoln* has now arrived in West Asian waters, U.S. Central Command said, without revealing its precise location.

Locked and loaded: A strike group led by the *USS Abraham Lincoln* has arrived in West Asian waters, says U.S. Central Command. AFP

Since Iran earlier this month launched the crackdown on protests accompanied by a blanket Internet blackout, Mr. Trump has given mixed signals on intervention which some opponents of the clerical leadership see as the only way to bring about change.

“We have a big armada next to Iran. Bigger than Venezuela,” Mr. Trump told the *Axios* news site, weeks after U.S. military action resulted in the capture of the Latin American nation’s President Nicolas Maduro.

But he added: “They want to make a deal. I know so. They called on numerous occasions. They want to talk.”

Axios said Mr. Trump declined to discuss the options presented to him by his national security team, or which one he prefers.

Analysts say options include strikes on military facilities or targeted hits against the leadership under Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a full-scale bid to bring down the system that has ruled Iran since the 1979 Islamic revolution that ousted the shah.

The *New York Times*, meanwhile, reported that Mr. Trump has received multiple U.S. intelligence reports “indicating that the Iranian government’s position is weakening” and signalling its hold on power “is at its weakest point” since the shah’s fall.

U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham told the paper he had spoken with Mr. Trump in recent days about Iran and that “the goal is to end the regime”.

“They may stop killing them today, but if they’re in charge next month, they’ll kill them then.”

Trump to hike tariffs on South Korea goods to 25%

Agence France-Presse
SEOUL

South Korea’s government on Tuesday held emergency talks after U.S. President Donald Trump said he will raise tariffs on South Korean goods, including autos, lumber and pharmaceuticals.

Mr. Trump said on Monday that he would raise tariffs on the goods, accusing South Korea of not living up to an earlier trade pact struck with Washington.

South Korea’s presidential office said it had not been officially informed about the tariff hike plans in advance.

The increase would bring tariff levels from 15% to 25%.

“South Korea’s Legislature is not living up to its Deal with the United States,” Mr. Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

Donald Trump

He added that he was increasing tariff rates “because the Korean Legislature hasn’t enacted our Historic Trade Agreement, which is their prerogative.”

On Tuesday, Seoul convened an emergency meeting to hash out a response, with Trade and Industry Minister Kim Jung-kwan, currently in Canada, joining remotely.

“Our government intends to convey its commitment to implementing the tariff agreement to the U.S. side, while responding in a calm and measured manner,” Seoul said in a statement.

The country added it believed Washington’s “tariff hikes only take effect after administrative steps such as publication in the Federal Register”.

South Korea has said Trade Minister Kim will travel to Washington for talks on the issue with U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick.

Mr. Trump’s apparent about-face comes months after Washington and Seoul struck a trade and security deal, capping a period of tense negotiations. The agreement was finalized after Trump met his South Korean counterpart Lee Jae Myung in October.

U.S. sued over deadly missile strikes on alleged drug boats

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

Relatives of two Trinidadian men killed last year in a U.S. military strike on a boat allegedly carrying drugs filed a wrongful death lawsuit on Tuesday against the U.S. government.

It is the first such case to be brought against the Trump administration over the three dozen missile strikes in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific, which have left at least 125 people dead since September.

The suit, filed in a federal court in Massachusetts, is being brought by the families of Chad Joseph, 26, and Rishi Samaroo, 41, who were among six people killed in an October 14 strike in the Caribbean.

President Donald Trump alleged at the time that “six male narcoterrorists” were killed in a boat allegedly ferrying drugs from Venezuela to the U.S. Washington has yet to release any evidence supporting its claims.

Doomsday Clock: 85 seconds to midnight

Vasudevan Mukunth

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has moved the hands of the Doomsday Clock to 85 seconds to midnight, the closest the world has ever been to global catastrophe in its estimation. The announcement, on January 27 in Washington DC, reflects a darkening security landscape marked by eroding nuclear norms, escalating conflicts in Europe and Asia, climate and biological risks, and a fracturing international order.

The new setting moves the clock forward from its previous position of 89 seconds to midnight from a year ago.

“Last year, we warned that the world was perilously close to catastrophe and that countries needed to change course towards international cooperation and actions on the most critical existential risks,” SSB Chair and University of Chicago professor Daniel Holz said. “Unfortunately, the opposite has happened.”

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was founded in 1945 by University of Chicago scientists who had helped develop the first atomic weapons in the Manhattan Project. The Doomsday Clock was created two years later, in 1947, as a metaphor for the likelihood of a human-made global catastrophe.

The Doomsday Clock

The Bulletin’s foremost concern seems to be nuclear weapons. Recent rhetoric from the Trump administration regarding the potential resumption of nuclear testing and the modernisation of atomic stockpiles is already destabilising decades of deterrence strategy, fuelling anxiety among both allies and adversaries.

“The last remaining treaty governing nuclear weapon stockpiles between the U.S. and Russia expires next week. For the first time in over half a century, there will be nothing preventing a runaway nuclear arms race,” Mr. Holz said.

He also cited the worsening consequences of climate change, AI’s effects on mis- and dis-information, and what he called the “rise of nationalistic autocracies” – referring to the recent events in Minnesota – to support the Clock being less than a minute and half from midnight.

‘Japan-U.S. ties would crumble if Tokyo ignored Taiwan crisis’

Reuters
TOKYO

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said Japan’s strategic alliance with the U.S. would collapse if Tokyo were to turn away from a conflict in Taiwan, but distanced herself from previous comments that suggested a possible military response in such an event.

Ms. Takaichi expressed her latest views on a nationally broadcast TV programme late on Monday, where an Opposition party leader criticised her for igniting tensions with China with the earlier remarks.

“I want to make it absolutely clear that this is not about Japan going out and taking military action if China and the United States come into conflict (over Taiwan),” Ms. Takaichi said. “If something serious happens there, we would have to go to rescue the Japanese and American citizens in Taiwan. In that situation, there may be cases where we take joint action.”

Sport

Alcaraz, Sabalenka, Zverev ease into the last four; Svitolina ousts Gauff

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Reuters
MELBOURNE

Carlos Alcaraz sizzled under the bright lights at the Australian Open and blazed into the semifinals on Tuesday after fellow top seed Aryna Sabalenka remained cool in the unforgiving Melbourne heat to stay on course for another title.

Alexander Zverev was briefly made to sweat under the roof of Rod Laver Arena against Learner Tien, but a frustrated Coco Gauff unravelled in a racquet-smashing meltdown following a stunning defeat by Elina Svitolina.

That preceded Alcaraz’s dominant 7-5, 6-2, 6-1 victory over Alex de Minaur on the main showcourt, as the Spaniard dashed his sixth-seeded opponent’s hopes of ending a five-decade Australian wait for a homegrown men’s champion.

The 22-year-old – a six-times major winner – is seeking his own piece of history at Melbourne Park, where he can eclipse Don Budge and become the youngest man to lift all four Grand Slam trophies.

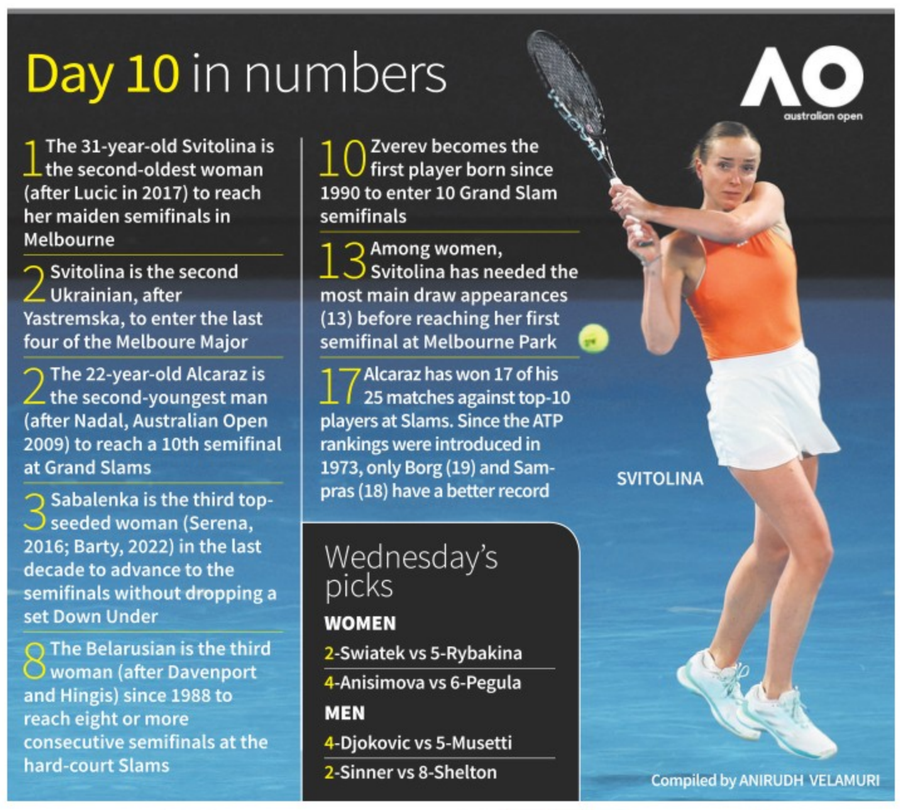
Sabalenka, chasing her third title in four years, also got into a high gear for a dominant 6-3, 6-0 win over 18-year-old Iva Jovic on a sweltering Centre Court, where the roof was open with the “Heat Stress Scale” not at its highest threshold.

Up next for Sabalenka is Ukrainian 12th seed Svitolina, who took full advantage of Gauff’s woes on serve and reached her first Australian Open semifinal with a 6-1, 6-2 victory in under an hour. Gauff later looked for a place without cameras to channel her frustration and was unhappy to find out that a video of her obliterating her racquet on a concrete floor inside Melbourne Park was broadcast to viewers worldwide.

The decision to close the roof made conditions easier for the players, but Zverev was unable to get into his comfort zone against Tien, before prevailing 6-3, 6-7(5), 6-1, 7-6 (3) and stay on course for a first Grand Slam trophy.

QUARTERFINAL RESULTS

Men: 3-Zverev (Ger) bt 25-Tien (USA) 6-3, 6-7(5), 6-1, 7-6(3); 1-Alcaraz (Esp) bt 6-de Minaur (Aus) 7-5, 6-2, 6-1.
Women: 1-Sabalenka (Blr) bt 29-Jovic (USA) 6-3, 6-0; 12-Svitolina (Ukr) bt 3-Gauff (USA) 6-1, 6-2.


Day 10 in numbers
1 The 31-year-old Svitolina is the second-oldest woman (after Lucic in 2017) to reach her maiden semifinals in Melbourne
2 Svitolina is the second Ukrainian, after Yastremska, to enter the last four of the Melboure Major
2 The 22-year-old Alcaraz is the second-youngest man (after Nadal, Australian Open 2009) to reach a 10th semifinal at Grand Slams
3 Sabalenka is the third top-seeded woman (Serena, 2016; Barty, 2022) in the last decade to advance to the semifinals without dropping a set Down Under
8 The Belarusian is the third woman (after Davenport and Hingis) since 1988 to reach eight or more consecutive semifinals at the hard-court Slams
10 Zverev becomes the first player born since 1990 to enter 10 Grand Slam semifinals
13 Among women, Svitolina has needed the most main draw appearances (13) before reaching her first semifinal at Melbourne Park
17 Alcaraz has won 17 of his 25 matches against top-10 players at Slams. Since the ATP rankings were introduced in 1973, only Borg (19) and Sampras (18) have a better record
Wednesday’s picks
WOMEN
2-Swiatek vs 5-Rybakina
4-Anisimova vs 6-Pegula
MEN
4-Djokovic vs 5-Musetti
2-Sinner vs 8-Shelton
AO australian open
SVITOLINA
Compiled by ANIRUDH VELAMURI

Godinez does it for Punjab Royals against Maharashtra Kesari

PWL

Sports Bureau

Ana Godinez proved to be the gamechanger for Punjab Royals with a dominating 11-2 win over Dudova Bilyana Zhivkova in 62kg, sealing the match and full points for her team in the Pro Wrestling League (PWL) in Greater Noida.

End of campaign

The victory helped Punjab Royals post a 5-4 win over Maharashtra Kesari, which ended its campaign with six points in five matches with 23 bout wins.

Royals raced to a 4-1 lead before Kesari fought back to make it 3-4 as Godinez sealed the deal.

The results:
Punjab Royals bt Maharashtra Kesari 5-4: Men: 57kg: Atish Todkar (Kesari) bt Chirag Chhikara (Royals) 13-10.
65kg: Tevanyan Vazgen (Kesari) bt Anuj Kumar (Royals) 12-0.
74kg: Chander Mohan (Royals) bt Yash (Kesari) 18-0.
86kg: Sandeep Maan (Royals) bt Amit (Kesari) 8-7.
125kg: Robert Baran (Kesari) bt Dinesh Dhankhar (Royals) 10-1;
Women: 53kg: Meenakshi (Royals) bt Guzman Lopez Yusneylis (Kesari) 6-0.
57kg: Manisha Bhanvala (Kesari) bt Rajnita Jangra (Royals) 2-1.
62kg: Ana Godinez (Royals) bt Dudova Bilyana Zhivkova (Kesari) 11-2.
76kg: Priya Malik (Royals) bt Diksha Malik (Kesari) by Fall 10-0].

WALK IN THE PARK

India crushes Zimbabwe in its u-19 WC Super Six opener

BCCI

Vihaan Malhotra smashed a ton as India beat Zimbabwe by 204 runs in their Super Six Group 2 match at the u-19 WC in Bulawayo on Tuesday. **The scores:** India 352/8 in 50 overs (Suryavanshi 52, Vihaan 109 n.o., Abhigyan 61, Chimugoro 3/49) bt Zimbabwe 148 in 37.4 overs (Chiwaula 62, Udhav 3/20, Mhatre 3/14). **PoM:** Vihaan.

WORLD CUP CHANCES

India will be the favourite, but it will need destiny and luck: Dravid

K.R. DEEPAK

Rahul Dravid rated India's chances highly at the upcoming T20 World Cup but felt luck would matter too. "T20 is the easiest format for upsets, but we have 80% success rate. India will make the semifinals, but after that, it is a question of having two good days. India will be the favourite, but it will need both destiny and luck".

NEED OF THE HOUR

Dravid bats for more red-ball practice ahead of Test matches

K. MURALI KUMAR

When I was playing, we used to get a whole month's training before a Test. How do you find the time to develop skills that are hard? Shubman [Gill] recently alluded to it, and he is someone who was playing all three formats until recently — Rahul Dravid on Indian batters' struggles against spin.

DOMINANT SHOW

Root, Brook slam tons as England seals series victory over Lanka

AFP

Joe Root and Harry Brook's centuries helped England beat Sri Lanka by 53 runs in the third ODI in Colombo on Tuesday and win the series 2-1. **The scores:** England 357/3 in 50 overs (Root 111 n.o., Bethell 65, Brook 136 n.o.) bt Sri Lanka 304 in 46.4 overs (Nissanka 50, Rathnayake 121). **Toss:** England. **PoM:** Brook; **PoS:** Root.

Fine margins: Devine took two wickets in the 20th over after Sneh survived a run-out scare. PTI

Devine holds nerve, Giants pip Capitals

With DC needing nine runs in the final over, the Kiwi concedes just five; Niki and Sneh's knocks go in vain; the victory takes Gujarat to second

WPL-4

Vivek Krishnan
VADODARA

The exuberance of Niki Prasad and the experience of Sneh Rana combined to nearly snatch victory from the jaws of defeat for Delhi Capitals in the Women's Premier League on Tuesday. However, Sophie Devine maintained her poise in the final over and helped Gujarat Giants eke out a three-run win at the Kotambi Stadium.

With Capitals needing nine runs off the last over to chase down 175, Devine conceded just five. The seamer managed to dismiss Sneh off the fourth ball, and had Niki hole out at long-on off the final ball.

That DC came so close was purely down to a rearguard stand of 70 between Niki and Sneh for the seventh wicket. When they came together, the visitors were 100 for six, requiring another 75 runs from 33 deliveries. The duo injected belief into the camp by taking 23 runs off Devine in the 17th over.

DC's response with the bat ebbed and flowed from the outset. In the first six overs, a mix of daring strokeplay and wayward bowling yielded a quick flow of runs, but DC also lost the wickets of openers Shafali Verma and Lizelle Lee.

Three quick wickets

Laura Wolvaardt and Jemimah Rodrigues seemed to bring a semblance of calm with a 31-run stand for the third wicket. But, in the space of 10 balls, Jemimah, Marizanne Kapp and Wolvaardt were all dismissed.

Rajeshwari Gayakwad removed Shafali, Wolvaardt and Chinelle Henry to finish with three for 20.

Earlier, Giants rode on Beth Mooney's 46-ball 58 to reach a competitive 174 for nine. Anushka Sharma, who made 39 at No. 3, provided able support to Mooney.

Having strode in at the fall of Devine's wicket, Anushka drove and flicked with authority for a spree of early boundaries. For DC, left-arm spinner Shree Charani starred with figures of four for 31.

Mooney brought up her half-century in the 15th over by charging at Shree Charani for a boundary towards long-on. She then pre-empted the bowler pulling back the length, and duly rocked back for a cut through point.

While the wicketkeeper-batter couldn't stay through to the end, the runs she compiled proved decisive to the final verdict.

Points table

	M	W	L	Pts	NRR
Royal Challengers (Q)	**7**	**5**	**2**	**10**	**0.947**
Gujarat Giants	7	4	3	8	-0.271
Mumbai Indians	7	3	4	6	0.146
Delhi Capitals	7	3	4	6	-0.164
UP Warriorz	6	2	4	4	-0.769

Q: Qualified

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT GIANTS
Beth Mooney c Jemimah b Nandani 58 *(46b, 7x4)*, Sophie Devine b Kapp 13 *(10b, 3x4)*, Anushka Sharma c Minnu b Shree Charani 39 *(25b, 8x4)*, Ashleigh Gardner c Sneh b Minnu 2 *(4b)*, Georgia Wareham b Shree Charani 11 *(7b, 1x6)*, Bharti Fulmali b Henry 3 *(5b)*, Kanika Ahuja lbw b Shree Charani 4 *(5b)*, Kashvee Gautam b Shree Charani 2 *(3b)*, Tanuja Kanwar c Shree Charani b Henry 21 *(11b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Renuka Singh (not out) 3 *(4b)*; Extras (b-5, lb-6, w-7): 18; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 174.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-19 (Devine, 2.2 overs), 2-73 (Anushka, 8.5), 3-96 (Gardner, 11.3), 4-128 (Wareham, 14.4), 5-131 (Bharti, 15.4), 6-135 (Mooney, 16.3), 7-139 (Kashvee, 17.1), 8-151 (Kanika, 17.6), 9-174 (Tanuja, 19.6).

CAPITALS BOWLING
Kapp 4-0-34-1, Henry 4-0-38-2, Nandani 4-0-26-1, Shree Charani 4-0-31-4, Sneh 1-0-11-0, Minnu 3-0-23-1.

DELHI CAPITALS
Shafali Verma c Gardner b Rajeshwari 14 *(10b, 3x4)*, Lizelle Lee c Gardner b Devine 11 *(20b, 2x4)*, Laura Wolvaardt b Rajeshwari 24 *(23b, 2x4)*, Jemimah Rodrigues b Devine 16 *(16b, 1x4)*, Marizanne Kapp b Gardner 0 *(1b)*, Chinelle Henry c Gardner b Rajeshwari 9 *(11b, 1x4)*, Niki Prasad c Gardner b Devine 47 *(24b, 9x4)*, Sneh Rana c Wareham b Devine 29 *(15b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Minnu Mani (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (b-4, lb-1, nb-1, w-14): 20; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 171.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-26 (Shafali, 2.2), 2-51 (Lee, 5.6), 3-82 (Jemimah, 10.6), 4-83 (Kapp, 11.2), 5-85 (Wolvaardt, 12.3), 6-100 (Henry, 14.3), 7-170 (Sneh, 19.4), 8-171 (Niki, 19.6).

GIANTS BOWLING
Renuka 1-0-16-0, Kashvee 2-0-18-0, Rajeshwari 4-0-20-3, Devine 4-0-37-4, Tanuja 4-0-26-0, Gardner 4-0-37-1, Wareham 1-0-12-0.

Toss: Capitals.
PoM: Devine.
Giants won by three runs.

Samson's form in focus at the City of Destiny

NZ IN INDIA

Anirudh Velamuri
VISAKHAPATNAM

India, having sealed the five-match series in Guwahati earlier this week, will turn its attention to a few lingering concerns when it faces New Zealand in the fourth T20I at the ACA-VDCA Stadium on Wednesday.

Chief among them is Sanju Samson's form. Despite possessing undeniable talent and sound technique, the wicketkeeper-batter has failed to make his opportunities count, even on surfaces tailor-made for stroke-play.

Scores of 10 and six in the first two matches were followed by a golden duck at the Gateway of the North East, leaving him vulnerable to serious scrutiny.

What compounds Samson's predicament is Ishan Kishan's scorching form, his direct competitor for the opener-keeper role. The weight of expectation – which has only increased since being preferred over Shubman Gill – appears to have taken its toll, and time is fast running out for the 31-year-old to cement his position in India's T20 setup.

Time running out? Samson has failed to make his opportunities count in the series so far. K.R. DEEPAK

India may also tweak its spin combination. Axar Patel and Ravi Bishnoi present strong alternatives to the likes of Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakaravarthy, who have struggled to find consistency in this series, especially on a surface that can slow down as the match progresses.

Beyond that, it has been smooth sailing for the Men in Blue ahead of their World Cup title defence. The focus could now shift towards giving players on the fringes – Shreyas Iyer among them – valuable game time to build momentum and confidence in the two fixtures that remain.

> We have the ability to stay calm amidst the storm that we are currently facing. We don't get too high or low

Workload management is also key. Given his injury history and packed recent schedule, India might consider resting Hardik Pandya, prioritising his freshness for the T20 showpiece.

Patchy performance

New Zealand, meanwhile, will be searching for consistency after a series marked by patchy batting and stuttering starts.

The visitor has repeatedly relied on Glenn Phillips and Mitchell Santner to steady the ship, a dependence it will be keen to reduce.

The bowling attack has also struggled to rein in India's aggressive batting, particularly through the middle overs and at the death, and could face another stern examination in the City of Destiny. The return of Lockie Ferguson, who has the knack of providing early breakthroughs with his pace and precision, offers some hope.

> We've got to keep our eye on the long term. That's also why we peak at ICC events
>
> **JACOB ORAM**
> NZ bowling coach

The surface here typically offers good bounce and carry early on before slowing down under lights, bringing spinners into play. Dew, as ever, is likely to be a significant factor.

In conditions where small margins can be decisive, even a dead rubber could offer telling clues.

The teams (from): India: Suryakumar Yadav (Capt.), Axar Patel (Vice-capt.), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wk), Shreyas Iyer, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Rinku Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakaravarthy, Ishan Kishan (wk) and Ravi Bishnoi.
New Zealand: Mitchell Santner (Capt.), Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway (wk), Jacob Duffy, Zak Foulkes, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Bevon Jacobs, Daryl Mitchell, James Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Ish Sodhi and Lockie Ferguson.
Match starts at 7 p.m.

Bowling variety gives us the edge: Morkel

Anirudh Velamuri
VISAKHAPATNAM

Bowling coach Morne Morkel said he was encouraged by the depth and versatility within the Indian squad, stressing that clear communication around roles remains a key focus for the coaching group.

"With the 11 that we can pick on match-day, we've got 11 match winners. Everybody has got a certain 'X' factor about them. They know that there's no guarantee of being the 11. It's about who's suited best for the conditions and how we can help the team win at the end of the day," he said.

Morkel heaped praise on Jasprit Bumrah, highlighting the importance of support and communication beyond technical input for the 32-year-old pace spearhead.

"Jasprit is the best bowler in the world. But at the end of the day, everybody needs somebody to talk to. There's always a lot of expectation on him to go and bowl that magical spell and win the game for us. Sometimes, that burden can take its toll," he explained.

"Having played the game and knowing a lot of the greats in the past that I played with, we all just need somebody to communicate with. I always check in with Bumrah to make sure he's comfortable and if he agrees with the plans we've made. He's like a Ferrari car. If you can get the engine, the oil and all of that running well, the car will perform."

He added that the Men in Blue's variety in bowling resources also gives them a tactical edge.

"It's a luxury that we have a handful of bowlers that can bowl in every situation. Part of the thinking for us leading into the World Cup was to look at different sorts of combinations. We don't want teams to have set plans against us."

Talking tactics: Morkel says he has a handful of bowlers who can deliver in any situation. K.R. DEEPAK

All smiles: Dhanraj Pillay, R. Kaushik, Chenraj Jain, G.R. Viswanath, Rahul Dravid and P.R. Sreejesh, at the launch of the book *The Rise of the Hitman: The Rohit Sharma Story*. K. MURALI KUMAR

Rohit showed great tactical nous in T20 WC final: Dravid

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Between Ahmedabad 2023 and Bridgetown 2024, India's fortunes in limited-overs cricket went through a roller-coaster.

If an inspired Australian team ensured that India's mesmerising run at home in the ODI World Cup did not have a sweet ending, the nation experienced ecstasy when it snatched victory from the jaws of defeat against South Africa in the T20 World Cup final.

Two men were central to this - the legendary Rahul Dravid as coach and Rohit Sharma as captain. A third, senior journalist R. Kaushik, chronicled both, with his book *The Rise of the Hitman: The Rohit Sharma Story* containing vivid accounts of both campaigns.

And Tuesday at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium was about celebrating Rohit, with Dravid in conversation with Kaushik, and former India pacer and Karnataka State Cricket Association president Venkatesh Prasad joining in via video-conference.

"Those five overs in the [T20 World Cup] final encapsulated Rohit," Dravid said. "He showed great tactical nous in realising that the game was slipping away - South Africa was 151 for four chasing 177 - and he had to bring the likes of [Jasprit] Bumrah back.

"There was great camaraderie on display with players ready to fight until the end. It was a tribute to all the work we had put in and it was really a culmination of everything."

Crediting Rohit for catalysing India's dynamic approach in white-ball cricket, Dravid doffed his hat to his man-management skills.

"Rohit loved being *one of the guys*. But he also balanced being the leader well. That is some real skill."

Dravid also revealed, in rich detail, how Rohit had lifted everybody's mood - including the usually sage-like Dravid's - in the aftermath of the stinging defeat in the opening Test versus England in Hyderabad in January 2024.

Kaushik, with decades-long experience of covering the sport, sought to highlight the facet that made the Dravid-Rohit combination effective.

"Rohit and Dravid were opposites in a lot of ways," he said. "But they were of similar thinking. We have this whole concept of aggression now. Rohit was aggressive but that didn't manifest in his behaviour".

INBRIEF

Honours even between Everton and Leeds

French striker Thierno Barry scored his fourth goal in five games in the Premier League to give Everton a 1-1 draw at home to Leeds.

The results: Premier League: Everton 1 (Barry 76) drew with Leeds 1 (Justin 28). **LaLiga:** Girona 1 (Reis 90+5) drew with Getafe 1 (Vazquez 59). **Serie A:** Verona 1 (Orban 26) lost to Udinese 3 (Atta 23, Zanoli 58, Davis 67).

Uncapped Ihsan picked in Scotland T20 WC squad

Last-minute T20 World Cup entrant Scotland has included uncapped pacer Zainullah Ihsan in its 15-member squad for the marquee event.

The squad: Richie Berrington (Capt.), Tom Bruce, Matthew Cross, Bradley Currie, Oliver Davidson, Chris Greaves, Zainullah Ihsan, Michael Jones, Michael Leask, Finlay McCreath, Brandon McMullen, George Munsey, Safyaan Sharif, Mark Watt and Bradley Wheal.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SCHEDULE

Ajax vs. Olympiacos; Arsenal vs. Kairat Almaty; Monaco vs. Juventus; Athletic Club vs. Sporting; Atletico Madrid vs. Bodo/Glimt; Barcelona vs. Kobenhavn; Leverkusen vs. Villarreal; Benfica vs. Real Madrid; Dortmund vs. Inter; Club Brugge vs. Marseille; Frankfurt vs. Tottenham Hotspur; Liverpool vs. Qarabag; Manchester City vs. Galatasaray; Napoli vs. Chelsea; Pafos vs. Slavia Prague; PSG vs. Newcastle; Eindhoven vs. Bayern; Union St.-Gilloise vs. Atalanta (1:30 a.m., Thursday).

LIVE TELECAST

Australian Open: Sony Sports Ten 2, 3, 5 & LIV, 1.30 p.m. & 5.30 a.m. (Thursday)

India vs New Zealand: 4th T20I, Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

PWL: Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 8 p.m.

Champions League: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3, 5 & LIV, 1.30 a.m. (Thursday).

SNAPSHOTS

Sreeja set to miss WTT Star Contender due to shoulder pain

CHENNAI: Sreeja Akula, India's top-ranked paddler in the world at No. 41, will not figure in the World Table Tennis Star Contender to be held at the Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University campus here from February 10 to 15, due to recurring pain in the right shoulder.

Speaking to *The Hindu* from Hyderabad on Tuesday, the 27-year-old said she was interested to play in Chennai, but didn't want to put unnecessary pressure on her shoulder.

Recuperating: Sreeja is skipping the tournament as she is experiencing pain in the right shoulder. FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJ\I

"I didn't want to be too harsh on my shoulder. I want it to heal gradually," she said.

Sreeja last featured in the China Smash in Beijing during September-October 2025, where she lost in the second round to China's Wang Yidi, after which she started to experience pain.

Sri Sri Ravishankar East storms into the final

BENGALURU: Sri Sri Ravishankar Vidyamandir, East, registered an eight-wicket win over Ebenezer IS in the semifinals of the BTR Shield u-14 second-division schools tournament.

The scores: Semifinals: Ebenezer IS 108 in 40.1 overs (Tejasvi Sharma 4/28) lost to Sri Sri Ravishankar Vidyamandir, East, 110/2 in 23.5 overs (Aarav Srivastava 46 n.o.).

The Sports School 217/7 in 50 overs bt School of India 185 in 46 overs (Hrithvik Shetty 81).

BGS National PS triumphs

BGS National Public School beat School Vivekananda by 48 runs in the final of the K.M. Ramprasad Shield under-16 second division schools tournament.

The scores: Final: BGS NPS 218 in 38.5 overs (Ankit V. Onkar 41) bt School Vivekananda 170 in 39.1 overs (Vedanth Vedanarayanan 4/19).

Stride FC downs FC Deccan

Stride FC registered a come-from-behind 2-1 victory over FC Deccan in the BDFA A-division football league championship on Tuesday.

The results: A-div.: Stride 2 (Nikesh Thokchom 69, Albert Akouam 86) bt FC Deccan 1 (S. Srujan 17); Real Chikkamagaluru 1 (Yumnam Roland Meitei 72) bt Sree Gajanana 0. **B-div.:** MD Sporting 4 (Bawanlumlang Thangkhiew 5, Thangjam Santosh 12, V.H. Akshay 46, Zeal K. Rymbal 65) bt Pillanna Garden 0.

Rajeshwari scores seven goals

Rajeshwari scored seven goals as Pondicherry thrashed Andaman 20-0 in the South Zone qualifying round of u-13 Asmitha-Khelo India Zonal Football League on Tuesday.

The results:

Pondicherry 20 (Rajeshwari 1, 8, 10, 29, 34, 37, 45, Eshanthika 3, M. Sivasri 4, 45, 46, 49, S. Sebiya 12, 36, Subha 16, 36, Mahadevi 30, 47, 48, 50) bt Andaman 0; Karnataka 8 (Gouri Ninganagouda Patil 7, Anvi Joshi 18, A. Subhathra 20, 21, 23, 29, 42, V.R. Pranitha 50) bt Andhra 0.

Bindra was the persuader Indian cricket misses today

BETWEEN WICKETS
Suresh Menon

With the passing of Inderjit Singh Bindra, a link with a revolution in cricket that shifted the power base from England to India has been severed. For so long has India's influence lasted and so profound has its impact been that it's easy to forget their ascendancy is less than four decades old.

In the mid-1980s, N.K.P. Salve, Bindra and Jagmohan Dalmiya proposed that the World Cup, hosted thrice by England now be shifted to India and Pakistan.

The administrators dangled the carrot that the BCCI continues to dangle – money. They promised much more of it, and took advantage of the rule then that allowed associate members one vote each (Test nations had two). This meant that the 18 associate members had a big say since the full members were just seven.

Dalmiya and Bindra as a team were the spit and polish of Indian cricket, the enforcer and the planner. It was a combination that could be seen on the field of play too. Think Javed Miandad and Imran Khan, or Kapil Dev and Sunil Gavaskar. Or Ian Botham and Mike Brearley.

The 1987 World Cup was only the start. The International Cricket Council, established in 1909, was a boys' club run from the offices of the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club), and sharing a secretary with it.

The MCC President automatically became chairman of the ICC. With founding member Australia, England enjoyed the power of veto. Bindra and Dalmiya set about upsetting this cozy arrangement.

Revolution complete

In 1993, the revolution was complete. The veto was abolished, India co-hosted the World Cup again three years later, and the first sniffs of the enormous power of television rights were felt.

India had many advantages – a television audience in the millions, a marketplace for consumer goods that needed advertising between overs, companies willing to spend on advertising, and a team or great players who drew the eyeballs. The economy had opened, bringing all these elements together to India's advantage.

Where India now miss the presence of a diplomat and persuader (in the gentler sense of the term, not as in Hollywood) like Bindra is obvious with the Bangladesh fracas. Whatever that country's political reasons for pulling out of the T20 World Cup in India next month, Bindra would not have allowed things to come to this pass. One telephone call would have made the difference.

Brinkmanship is useful when you have less to lose, and in this case Bangladesh had more, both financially and cricket-wise. Pakistan's current stance in support isn't likely to end well for them either.

The 1996 situation where India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka hosted the World Cup is unimaginable now. In 1986, when India's Operation Brasstacks, mobilised troops along the border, and Pakistan mobilised too, it was Bindra who persuaded Pakistan's military dictator General Zia-ul-Haq to visit India to ease tension. Sometimes those ruling cricket (Bindra was a bureaucrat, not a politician) can do good too!

The *Los Angeles Times* reported: "as the air bristled with tough talk, the Pakistani cricket team arrived for its scheduled, months-long, series of matches with the Indian team.

And almost as quickly as a fast bowler gets the ball to the stumps, the war-talk evaporated. Diplomats quickly signed an agreement under which both sides would pull back troops from their shared frontier. The tension eased measurably."

Self-image

A cricket team reflects its nation's self-image. And this self-image can be a treacherous thing, wanting to assert itself in all situations, grave as well as inconsequential, and everything in between.

The self-image changes according to circumstance too. We seem to be currently a muscle-flexing, imperious people, especially when faced with those patently weaker. Bangladesh are being taught a lesson which they knew all along.

Then there's the International Cricket Council which says shifting the Bangladesh matches out of India "could set a precedent that would jeopardise the sanctity of future ICC events and undermine its neutrality as a global governing body." This is rich, considering that the Chairman of the ICC is the son of India's Home Minister, and venues have been shifted before – the so-called 'hybrid' model – to suit India.

Indian cricket misses an administrator like Bindra, the man who saw the big picture.

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